

CALIFORNIA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Riverside, California

Understanding Millennial Retention: A Case Study Discovering Effective Millennial Employee

Retention Strategies at a Nonprofit Organization in Southern California

A Dissertation Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree
Doctor of Education in Organizational Change and Administration

Ashley E. Osier

Dr. Robert K. Jabs School of Business

May 2024

Understanding Millennial Retention: A Case Study Discovering Effective Millennial Employee
Retention Strategies at a Nonprofit Organization in Southern California

Copyright © 2024

by Ashley E. Osier

Understanding Millennial Retention: A Case Study Discovering Effective Millennial Employee Retention Strategies at a Nonprofit Organization in Southern California

by

Ashley E. Osier

has been approved by the Dr. Robert K Jabs School of Business in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

July 2024

DocuSigned by:

Jamie Petrilla

33BDCF7A489D486

Jamie Petrilla, Committee Chair

DocuSigned by:

Dr. Julia Britt

7EED05511B12449

Julia Britt, Committee Member

DocuSigned by:

Dr. Christina Maria Gonzalez

9E249A8AD8CA414

Christina Maria Gonzalez, Committee Member

DocuSigned by:

Tim Gramling

CA2DA3A6550845F

Tim Gramling, LPD., FACHE, Dean, Jabs School of Business

ABSTRACT

In this study, the problem addressed was the lack of practical retention strategies that can be used to retain millennial employees in the nonprofit sector. Using a qualitative study, the purpose was to discover retention strategies to influence an increase of the retention of millennial employees at a nonprofit organization in Southern California. To gather necessary data for the study the investigative research theory and administrative theory were used as the framework. Video interviews were conducted, recorded, and then analyzed using the five-step process for qualitative research methodology. The recordings were transcribed and coded then used for data analysis to discover themes. The themes found through data indicated that the millennial generation is looking for advancement, philanthropy, education, work–life balance, and a healthy work environment from their workplace, which contribute to their retention at the nonprofit organization. Current data indicate that the millennial employees at a nonprofit organization in Southern California are effectively retained through career advancement, organization mission and outreach, educational opportunities, and a positive workplace. Recommendations from the results of the study are for nonprofit organizational leaders to understand their retention strategies to continue to have successful retention with the millennial generation in the future.

Keywords: millennial, nonprofit, retention, California

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Petrilla, and committee members for helping me achieve my goal to become a doctor of education.

I would like to express my gratitude to my program director, Dr. Bowden, who has been an inspiration in my educational journey through multiple degrees.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my best friends, Nicole and Charlee. Thank you for support throughout my doctoral journey. I could not have accomplished this work without you both by my side. I am forever grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background of the Problem.....	1
Statement of the Research Problem.....	4
Purpose Statement.....	4
Research Questions.....	4
Scope and Significance of the Problem.....	5
Definitions.....	6
Organization of the Study.....	8
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	9
Theory of Generations.....	9
Generations in the Workplace.....	11
Baby Boomers.....	12
Generation X.....	12
Generation Z.....	14
Influential Generational Differences.....	15
Generational Research Gaps.....	15
Millennial Employee Retention.....	16
Millennial Overturn.....	17
Job-Hopping.....	17
The Great Resignation.....	18
The Relation of Nonprofits and Millennials.....	19
Common Mindset.....	19
Working for a Purpose.....	21
Research Gaps.....	22
Theoretical Framework.....	22
Investigative Research Theory.....	23
The Administrative Theory.....	23
Summary.....	24
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY.....	26
Purpose Statement.....	26
Research Questions.....	26
Protection of Human Subjects.....	27
Research Design.....	28

Population	28
Sample.....	29
Instrumentation	31
Data Collection	31
Data Analysis	32
Step 1: Organize and Prepare the Data	32
Step 2: Review the Data.....	33
Step 3: Code the Data	33
Step 4: Create Themes	33
Step 5: Represent the Themes.....	33
Design and Instrument Limitations.....	33
Personal Bias.....	34
Summary.....	35
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS.....	36
Purpose Statement.....	36
Research Questions.....	36
Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures	37
Preparing With Leadership	37
Gathering Participants.....	37
Participant Details.....	38
Conducting the Interview.....	40
Reviewing the Data.....	41
Step 1: Organize and Prepare the Data	41
Step 2: Review the Data.....	42
Step 3: Code the Data	42
Step 4: Create Themes	42
Step 5: Represent the Themes.....	42
Presentation and Analysis of Data	43
Advancement	45
Employee Retention.....	45
Promotion Opportunities.....	45
Philanthropic	46
Organization Mission.....	46
Sharing Passion.....	47
Education	47
Higher Education	48
Continued Education.....	48
Sharing Knowledge.....	49
Work-Life Balance.....	49
Organization Flexibility	50
Personal Time	51
Work Environment.....	51
Teamwork	51
Growing Community	52

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	53
Significant Findings	54
Conclusions.....	56
Effective Retention Strategies for Millennial Nonprofit Organization Employees.....	57
Nonprofit Mission Influence on Millennial Employees	59
Practical Organizational Benefits at Nonprofit Organizations for Millennial Employees	59
Implications for Action.....	61
Recommendations for Further Research.....	63
Concluding Remarks and Reflections.....	63
 REFERENCES	 64
 APPENDICES	 71
A. Informed Consent.....	72
B. Participant Screening.....	74
C. Interview Questions.....	75

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Generation Birth Years	1
Table 2. Participant Response Themes and Characteristics.....	44

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. 2021 Voluntary Resignations by Age Chart.....	3
Figure 2. United States Estimated Live Births.....	6
Figure 3. Review of Literature Process Flow	10
Figure 4. Confluence of Meaningful Mindset.....	20
Figure 5. Participant Birth Years	39
Figure 6. Participant Employment Length With Nonprofit Organization	39
Figure 7. Creating Themes Map	44
Figure 8. Nonprofit Millennial Retention Strategies Outline	57

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As the millennial generation, born between the years 1980 and 1995, enters the workforce during the mass employee exodus of the Great Resignation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020, nonprofit organizational leaders must be aware of the millennial workplace requirements to create effective millennial employee retention for their organizations (Montaro, 2020; Ng et al., 2018). According to demographic projections from Deloitte Global (2022), the millennial generation will soon be the largest generation employed by the workforce. Even though millennials are one of the youngest generations in the workforce, as shown in Table 1, they are given room for growth with organizations as the baby boomer generation turns to retirement. Understanding how to achieve effective millennial employee retention will allow for nonprofit organizations to recruit millennial employees to carry out their missions as the prior generations move into retirement, leaving an opening for organizational staffing shortages.

Table 1

Generation Birth Years

Generation	Birth year range	
	Start	End
Baby boomer	1946	1964
Generation X	1965	1980
Millennial	1981	1995
Generation Z	1996	2010

Note. Adapted from “Generation Z Perceptions of a Positive Workplace Environment,” by B. Leslie, C. Anderson, C. Bickham, J. Horman, A. Overly, C. Gentry, C. Callahan, and J. King, 2021, *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 33(3), p. 173.

Background of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study was the lack of practical retention strategies that can be used to retain millennial employees in the nonprofit sector. Beginning in 2020, the United

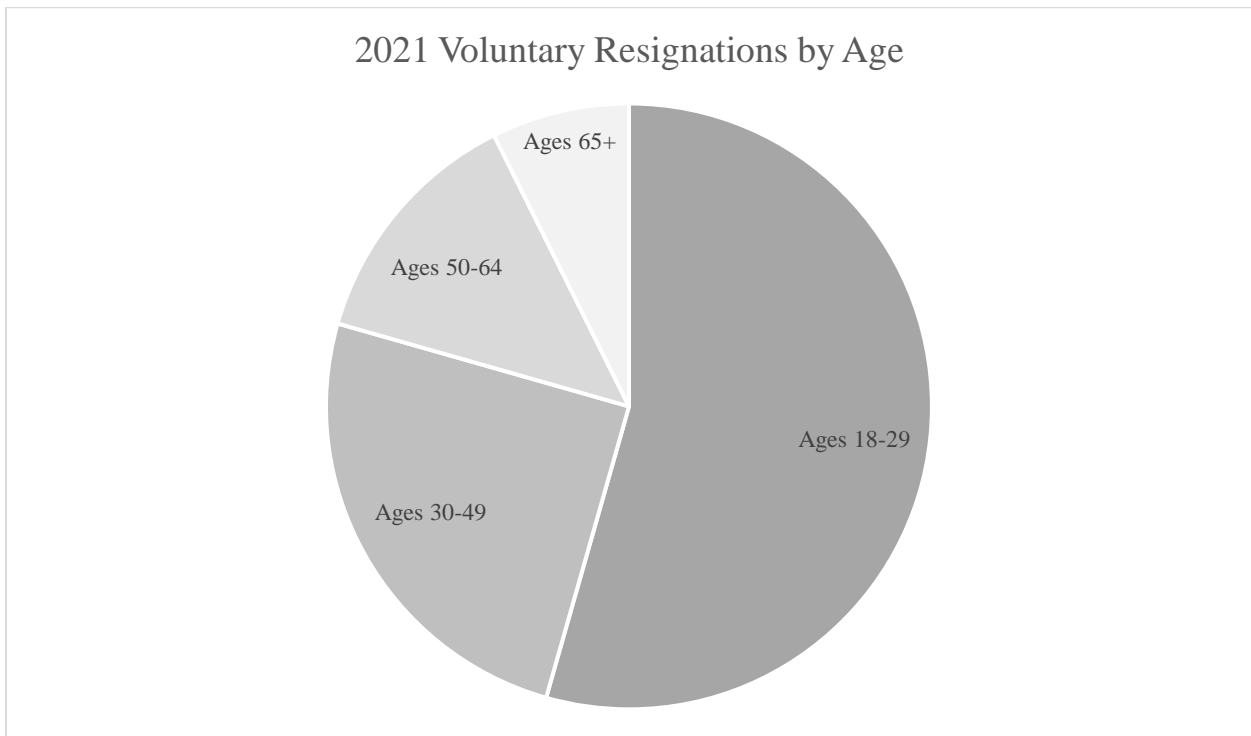
States was faced with an era referred to as the Great Resignation, leading to an unexpected number of employee resignations from organizations, specifically resignations with generations newer to the workforce like millennials and Generation Z (Bayraktar, 2022). In March 2020, the United States was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; the coronavirus disease forced workplaces to shut down because of health and safety concerns (Fraley et al., 2022; Himes, 2022). The Great Resignation, a voluntary mass exodus of employees from current positions, followed the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic that has left many employers short-staffed and unable to perform their duties as an organization. During the third quarter of 2020, the largest baby boomer retirement was recorded; 28.6 million employees of the baby boomer generation reported they opted for retirement, which was 3.2 million more employees than 2019 retirees (Fry, 2020). In 2021, voluntary resignations occurred highest in age groups consisting of the millennial generation (see Figure 1). When further examining the research related to millennials who resigned during the pandemic, the researcher found an indication that the generation is leaving organizations to find positions that are more than just a paycheck (Bayraktar, 2022; Deloitte Global, 2022). The millennial generation is looking for roles that allow them to have a work–life balance, development opportunities, mental health and wellness support, and commitment from their organization to have a positive social influence.

When examining multiple career sectors, the researcher found that the nonprofit industry has presented itself as a sector that shares the ideals millennials deem necessary from their employers. These factors include working for a purpose and diverse knowledge to benefit others (Kovic & Hänsli, 2018; Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021). Nonprofit organizations intend to pursue an organizational mission that involves a positive social impact (Coupet & Berrett, 2019; Freeman, 2021; Kovic & Hänsli, 2018). The nonprofit sector has continued to have employee

retention during past years whereas other sectors have struggled to retain employees (Freeman, 2021). As the baby boomer generation has continued its retirement trends, organizations have been left short staffed in the nonprofit sector; unless they work to retain the generations newer to the workforce, in particular the millennial generation (Montaro, 2020). Organizational leaders in the nonprofit sector require awareness and training on these retention strategies to secure the continued success of their organizations through effective millennial employee retention.

Figure 1

2021 Voluntary Resignations by Age Chart



Note. Adapted from “Majority of Workers Who Quit a Job in 2021 Cite Low Pay, No Opportunities, for Advancement, Feeling Disrespected,” by K. Parker and J. M. Horowitz, 2022, Pew Research Center (<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/03/09/majority-of-workers-who-quit-a-job-in-2021-cite-low-pay-no-opportunities-for-advancement-feeling-disrespected/>).

Statement of the Research Problem

Even though the millennial generation has been entering the workforce for multiple years, there is still a lack of research investigating successful retention of millennial employees in the nonprofit sector, specifically following the Great Resignation (Wilson, 2022). The Great Resignation allowed employees to leave their careers when they no longer were fulfilled without facing judgment from their peers (Bayraktar, 2022; Fraley et al., 2022; Himes, 2022). With a generation clearly open to change, an understanding is needed of the attraction for millennials to choose the nonprofit sector as their career of growth. Because the understanding can be described and articulated, nonprofit organizations can have more capability and success in effective millennial employee retention, allowing the organizations to further grow their influence of social impact (Deloitte Global, 2022).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this case study was to discover retention strategies to influence an increase of the retention of millennial employees at a nonprofit in Southern California. Retention strategies are strategies that positively influence millennial employees to continue employment at nonprofit organizations.

Research Questions

To understand effective millennial employee retention strategies in the nonprofit sector, a case study was conducted and undergirded by the investigative research theory (Layder, 2018) and administrative theory (Tosi, 2009). Data were collected for the case study to answer the following research questions that guided the study:

Q1: What are effective strategies that will positively impact retention of millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?

Q2: What influence does a nonprofit organization's mission have on retaining millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?

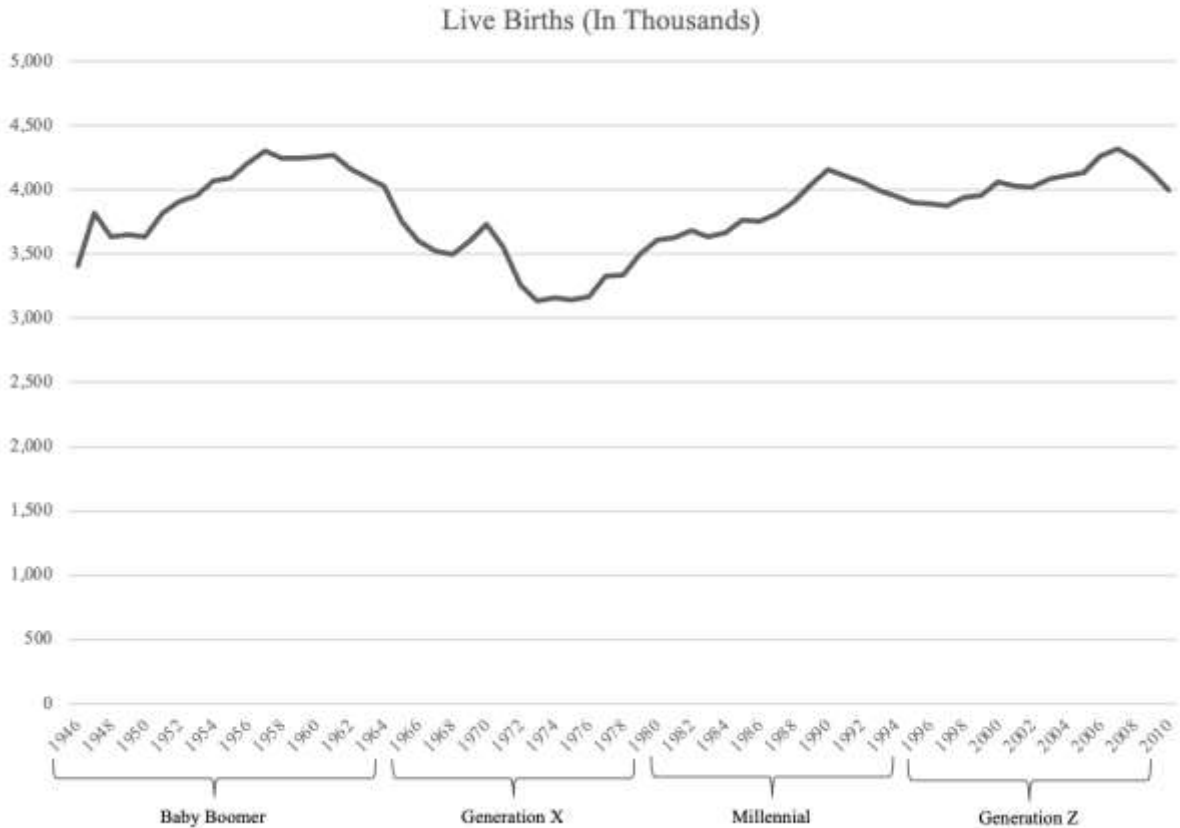
Q3: What are practical organizational benefits that attract millennial employees to nonprofit organizations?

Scope and Significance of the Problem

Nonprofit organizations operate to aid and support communities in which they are involved to allow social impact through a variety of educational and charitable purposes (Deloitte Global, 2022). For nonprofits to continue their mission of influencing social impact, the organizations need to be able to retain staff who support their mission, specifically the millennial generation (Freeman, 2021). Millennials are a newer generation in the workforce, which allows them to have the opportunity to provide an organization with many years of service as an employee compared to those of the Baby Boomer generation approaching retirement (Montaro, 2020). To prevent high rates of employee turnover, leaders of nonprofit organizations should identify and acknowledge the ideals of the millennial generation and make necessary accommodations (Kuzior et al., 2022). With the baby boomer generation retiring in the near future and the lower birthrate from Generation X, as seen in Figure 2, nonprofit leaders need to understand how to create and support effective millennial employee retention to ensure they are not faced with a staffing shortage. A staffing shortage for a nonprofit organization limits the ability to contribute to their mission, leaving an opportunity for an organization to be forced to close in a community that needs their assistance. Figure 2 shows the number of live births in the United States from 1946 to 2010. The figure shows that the baby boomer generation had a peak in births in the 1950s, and births in the United States remained lower until a peak of millennial births in the 1990s.

Figure 2

United States Estimated Live Births



Note. Adapted from “Estimates of Resident Population, by Age Group, Live Births, and Fertility Rate: 1970 Through 2020,” by National Center for Education Statistics, 2021 (https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_101.10.asp) “Table 1-1. Live Births, Birth Rates, and Fertility Rates, by Race: United States, 1909-99,” by National Center for Health Statistics, September 2002, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/statab/t991x01.pdf>).

Definitions

Key terms have been defined according to the manner in which they are used in the study.

Baby boomer generation. The generation born between 1946 and 1964. The generation was born following World War II and is approaching retirement age in the United States (Montero, 2020).

COVID-19 pandemic. A global pandemic that began in March, 2020. The pandemic forced nonessential workplaces to temporarily close because of health and safety protocols. Long-term economic and societal impacts resulted from the pandemic that were ongoing at the time of this study (Fraley et al., 2022).

Generation X. The generation born between 1965 and 1980. The generation known as the generation who followed in the work shadows of the baby boomer generation (Dameria et al., 2022).

Generation Z. The generation born between 1996 and 2010. This generation is newest generation to enter the workforce in 2022 (Montaro, 2020).

The Great Resignation. The voluntary mass exodus of employees from current positions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which created unprecedented changes in the workforce (Fraley et al., 2022).

Millennial generation. The generation born between 1981 and 1995. This generation is also referred to as the millennial generation and generation me (Ng et al., 2018).

Nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organizations are organizations that do not operate for a profit or revenue; the organizations operate for a purpose to help others through charitable means. The organizations must meet a tax-exempt requirement classifying them as a 501(c)(3) under the internal revenue code (Montaro, 2020).

Retention. Initiatives that are taken by management to keep employees from leaving the organization, such as employee rewards for successfully performing their duties, harmonious working relationships between managers and employees, and providing a healthy and safe work environment (Mahal, 2012).

Organization of the Study

To effectively understand the study and the process of research, Chapter 1 introduced the purpose of the study. Through four additional chapters the purpose of the study will be supported through background research in addition to interview data collection and analyzation to find effective retention strategies for the millennial generation. Chapter 2 reviews the literature for the study. The literature review includes three main themes: theory of generations, millennial employee retention strategies, and the relation of nonprofits and millennials. The literature is presented to create a better understanding of the aspects influencing the study and the importance of the study. Chapter 3 includes the methodology that was used for the study, which includes an introduction to the methods of the study in conjunction with the framework of the investigative research and administrative theory. This chapter overviews the method of the study that includes millennial employees from a nonprofit organization in Southern California. The remainder of Chapter 3 overviews the steps taken to collect and analyze data for the case study. Chapter 4 details the process of conducting the study, collecting the data, and presenting the findings. The data collected are presented in themes to provide a better understanding. In Chapter 5, conclusions and recommendations are provided based on the study results to effectively retain millennial employees at the nonprofit organization.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

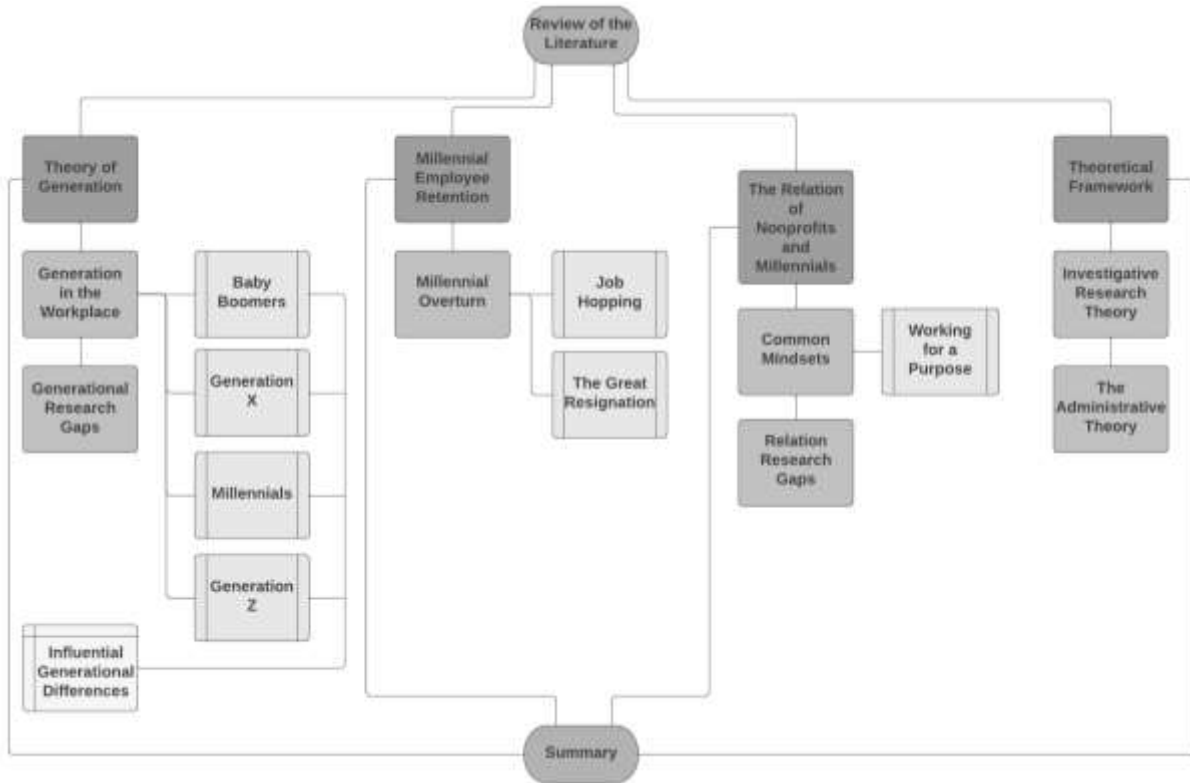
This literature review provides an overview of how nonprofit organizations are able to obtain positive millennial employee retention, as displayed in Figure 3. The review examines three contributors to nonprofit positive millennial employee retention: (a) theory of generations (Mannheim, 1952), (b) millennial employee retention strategies (Deloitte Global, 2022), and (c) the relation of nonprofits and millennials (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021). Through the theory of generations (Mannheim, 1952; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2020; Ryder, 1965), a review of relevant research undergirds a description of the generation in the workplace and their workforce preferences and impacts. The concept of millennial employee retention reveals the relationship between having positive employee retention and the millennial generation. The information regarding the relation between nonprofits and millennials has present common ideals between the sector and generation. The review of literature provides an overview for nonprofit organization leaders to obtain positive millennials' employee retention at their organizations and establishes the gap in research this study was intended to fill.

Theory of Generations

The term generations was first introduced by Mannheim (1952) as a way to categorize the differences between age groups. Mannheim's work theorized that generations provide a basis for understanding social movements and how social change is attainable while preserving cultural traditions and identities (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2020). During the study, Mannheim established five processes by which generations are able to facilitate social change: (a) the emerging of new participants continually during the cultural process, (b) the continuance of former participants in the process are disappearing, (c) the

Figure 3

Review of Literature Process Flow



members of any one generation are only able to participate temporarily in the historical process, (d) the necessity of continual transition of cultural heritage, and (e) the continual transmission from generation to generation (Mannheim, 1952). Mannheim's findings linked to other sociological theories in relation to lending flexibility to provide new perspectives concerning social problems. Ryder (1965) further studied the findings of Mannheim, which led to the developed theory of what could be described as a succession of birth cohorts. Ryder's discovery determined that age in time affects the transformation of the cohort. Mannheim concluded the two essential elements that form a generation are the common location of historical time and awareness of historical location (Mannheim, 1952). As time continues and social impacts affect each cohort, the generations are able to transform. The transformation of social impacts in

relation to age has set the outlines of the generations seen through history today (Ryder, 1965). Mannheim disclosed that other variables can have effects on outlooks based on their geographical location and culture (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2020). To further interpret Mannheim, a disaster that occurs in the United States may not have the same social impact on a European country. The studies conducted by Mannheim and Ryder have led to a foundation of the evolving generations present today.

Each cohort has been affected by historical impacts allowing for continual changes in their characteristics through baby boomers, Generation X, millennials, and Generation Z. Drawing focus on the working generations as generations have moved throughout their careers, they have allowed social impact to influence their working output. To fully understand the implications of generational careers, organizations need a comprehensive understanding of generational standards, similarities, and differences in their approach to the workplace.

Generations in the Workplace

Since World War II, each person born has been assigned to a generation, an era referencing a period of birth years (Mannheim, 1952). The generations are separated over multiple decades and are given a proper name frequently followed by a nickname to represent the generation; the exact year span can fluctuate among studies because of diverse variables (Dameria et al., 2022; Leslie et al., 2021; Montaro, 2020). Deloitte Global (2022) found that baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z are the most frequent generations currently employed in the workplace. Baby boomers are the generation born between 1946 and 1964 (Montaro, 2020). Following the baby boomers is Generation X, the generation born between 1965 and 1980 (Dameria et al., 2022). From 1981 to 1995, Generation Y, also known as millennials, made their way into the world (Montaro, 2020). Generation Z is the newest

generation in the workplace, born between 1996 and 2010 (Leslie et al., 2021). Examining the impacts of generations and their influences on the workplace, there are two that have left the most significant impression, the baby boomer and millennial generations. When the boomer generation set their standards for the workplace, they were not challenged by Generation X, also known as the invisible generation (Clark, 2017). When millennials entered the workforce, they brought challenges to the baby boomer generation that they never expected.

Baby Boomers

In addition to their generational given name, baby boomers were also referenced as traditionalists (Perilus, 2020). The name of traditionalists formed in their home life, where fathers took the lead as head of the home and the responsibility to work and provide for their families while the mothers stayed home to care for the house and children. In conclusion of the traditionalist outlook, the workforce of the generation was predominantly male. Baby boomers viewed their work as a piece of who they were as a person, and this caused them to make sacrifices for their work rather than their families. The baby boomer generation believed that for organizations to find success, there had to be sacrifices. The generation was viewed as hard-working, but there were areas of their leadership development that they forfeited throughout their careers, which Montaro (2020) raised as a concern for coming generations. The generation created an intense workplace but limited leadership skills of communication, understanding, and motivation (Perilus, 2020).

Generation X

Generation X followed the baby boomer generation, which had a great impact on the workforce. Portrayed as the children of boomers, Generation X was able to have the childhood impression of parents who were immensely dedicated to their work (Morales, 2021). The

generation still retained a dedication to their work similar to the baby boomers but relaxed the mentality of loyalty to the workplace. Dameria et al. (2022) stated that Generation X was shadowed into the gap following the baby boomer generation. Through social impacts, Morales (2021) showed the generation was able to shape an outlook allowing them to yearn for independence and freedom in the workplace. The generation still respects leadership; however, they view their leaders as advisors rather than dictators. The new ideals of Generation X initiated the idea of having a life beyond work, which was further carried out by their generational children, the millennials.

Millennials

Birthered from Generation X, the millennial generation saw the world in a new light (Morales, 2021). The generation entered the workforce with ideas that challenged generational standards before them. Previous generations have felt that they needed to give their lives to their work, but millennials had a different approach to work in their life. The generation become known for its introduction of work–life balance (Kroth & Young, 2014). Work–life balance allows a clear separation between working life and home life for employees; they are no longer putting work as the center of their attention. The millennial generation employees have been found not to have a deep loyalty to their jobs, further growth from the inspiration of Generation X (Morales, 2020; Wood, 2019). The generation wants to be known for more than what they do in their work or who they are in their career, and they want to be known as who they are as individuals to the outside world (Gong et al., 2018).

The millennial generation has encountered leadership skills influenced by previous generations, which they are working to change to allow for a more engaging workplace (Valenti, 2019). As part of the millennial initiative toward change, the generation is opening the world to

diversity in the workplace. Rather than having male-dominated industries organized by baby boomers, the generation is seeking to broaden acceptance of gender, age, and race in the workplace (Souffrant, 2020). Through research studies, the millennial generation has been established as the most ethnically diverse generation (Cruz, 2014). In addition to diversity, the generation encourages employees to voice their opinions and concerns to create a guide for their organization rather than being told what to do by personnel in leadership positions (Wolor et al., 2021). Communication has been reinvented with the millennial generation; two-way communication exists with the millennial generation in all roles of an organization (Stephens, 2021). The engagement of employees and acceptance of their ideas displays organizational motivation. Millennials have used social impact as part of their growth to a more open work environment, allowing future generations to enter the workforce with their evolving ideas.

Generation Z

Following the change presented by the millennials, Generation Z is the most recent cohort to join the workforce (Mann, 2022). Although the millennial generation holds the title of the most diverse generation in the workforce, Generation Z is the largest and most diverse generation in the world. Comparing Generation Z and millennial ideals, they are often rooted in the same idea; however, Generation Z has experienced social impacts differently than millennials, allowing for changes to be influenced from different perspectives (Mann, 2022). Generation Z is working to make a more significant mark on the workforce, which will be evident as the entire generation is able to age into their careers. With the advanced growth of the generation, the jobs that Generation Z could hold in the future may be jobs that are currently nonexistent (Seemiller & Grace, 2018). The millennial generation continues to use insight from Generation Z as they further challenge the motives of past generations (Mann, 2022).

Influential Generational Differences

The baby boomer generation placed ideals and rules on the workforce they followed throughout their career with little or no change. Clark (2017) explained that Generation X did not challenge their leaders, so many procedures remained unchanged and unquestioned. When the millennial generation entered the workforce filled with ideals created by two prior generations, they started asking questions. The young generation saw the world in a different light than the baby boomers and was ready to make a change (Ng et al., 2018). It was often referenced that the baby boomer generation faced world impacts that no other generation would understand, but that idea was distorted when it came to the millennial generation. Both baby boomer and millennial generations experienced forms of recession, war, riots, and political challenges (Hoolachan & McKee, 2019). They are two generations that faced similar disadvantages but took away different outlooks.

Generational Research Gaps

Many studies have been undertaken to understand the different generations in the workplace, but they have usually involved three or more generations in their research (Deloitte Global, 2022; Kovic & Hänsli, 2018; Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021). The generations typically included are baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. It is informative to include all the generations, but that leaves out valuable information about the competition between the two significant generations, baby boomer and millennials (Morales, 2021). In other studies when the generations have been limited to focus on baby boomers and millennials, researchers have usually included the transition generation of Generation X (Dickson, 2015). If the studies were on a single generation, they limited influence from past generations. Some studies have shown the feelings of baby boomers' work ethic and millennials'

work ethic, but they included diversity in their interview questions, providing a gap in the research (Morales, 2021). If a study was to be completed to understand the baby boomer and millennial generation, it would need to be done in a qualitative study to gather detailed answers. The questions would also need to be the same for both generations to allow a clear understanding. The research would be most beneficial if it were conducted in a business setting because many related studies have focused on the medical field, often portraying a different outline of leadership. This study identified the gaps in the research and sought to provide a clear understanding of the two generations that find themselves compared most often.

Millennial Employee Retention

Regarding the workforce, employee retention has been a challenge for many years, specifically following the global COVID-19 pandemic (Himes, 2022). During the pandemic, many people were laid off, took pay cuts, or had to leave their jobs because of health concerns (Bayraktar, 2022). The workforce faces another challenge as the world is working to recover from the pandemic (Fraley et al., 2022). Following the pandemic, the Great Resignation arose, creating unprecedented changes to the workforce through a voluntary mass exodus of employees from their current positions. As the Great Resignation continues to occur, organizations are examining their workplaces to see how they can retain employees before it is too late. A large portion of the current workforce is the millennial generation, and in a few years, they will be the largest employed generation, making them a needed target for retention (Bayraktar, 2022; Deloitte Global, 2022). Because of conditions of the Great Resignation, the annual study completed by Deloitte Global (2022) revealed that 24% of millennial employees said they would like to leave their jobs within 2 years, and 32% would leave without having another job lined up.

If the millennial generation remains untargeted as the baby boomer generation continues to move into retirement, there will be a more considerable shortage of workers in the world.

As the Great Resignation is causing many millennial employees to leave their jobs, they are leaving to find positions that better suit their values (Deloitte Global, 2022). Millennial employees have set factors they are looking for when seeking their new roles, and organizations need to be able to offer them to have positive employee retention. Deloitte Global's (2022) research showed that one of the top reasons employees chose their current organization is that they were able to derive a sense of meaning from their work. There is a need for organizations to understand the millennial generation to further organizational growth with younger generations.

Millennial Overturn

The millennial generation has embraced the notion of voluntary overturn (Hamilton, 2020). The cause of voluntary overturn can be linked to many different factors that stem from opinion. Millennials have taken the opportunity to leave an organization as they see fit, which can be characterized by two main classifications: job-hopping and Great Resignation (Kuzior et al., 2022). With such ease of leaving, there needs to be a further understanding of millennial job-hopping and the Great Resignation for organizational benefit.

Job-Hopping

Since the millennial generation began entering the workforce, they have been known for changing jobs every 2 years (AbouAssi et al., 2021). Job-hopping occurs for seven main reasons—job enjoyment, opportunities for professional growth, supportive workplaces, flexible work time, individual niche, employee benefits, and compensation (Rivers, 2018). Millennials are a generation that is not ready to settle in their careers, which was seen in the baby boomer generation. The millennial generation knows their worth as employees and transition in their

careers as needed to find an organization to respect their worth. Even though it is challenging to keep millennial employees retained with the same organization, some companies still follow the baby boomer generation, leaving benefits to be better for new employees to attract them but forget to take care of the employees they already have employed. Organizations need to be aware of their actions, or they will continue encouraging millennial job-hopping (Rivers, 2018).

The Great Resignation

The Great Resignation was first identified through the mass resignation of employees from various job sectors, which was fueled by employment dissatisfaction following the pandemic (Bayraktar, 2022). The Great Resignation, combined with a generation of easily persuaded employees to leave their workplaces, has drawn concern. In 2022, a quantitative study was completed by Kuzior et al. (2022) to understand the Great Resignation and employee engagement of Generations Y and Z. In their study, the organization faced a 51% turnover rate in 2021, which was 15% higher than the prior year. The study continued to show the top four reasons the employees resigned: development opportunities, unchallenging and dull tasks, company culture and values, and relationships with leadership. The items presented as the reasons for employees leaving all have the opportunity to change if the leadership chooses to make the change. The baby boomer generation still impacts organizational ideals, which conflict with the millennials' requirements for their employers. The baby boomer generation is working toward retirement, and with the Great Resignation, employers should realign their organizations to suit the wants of the millennial generation (Deloitte Global, 2022). If employers fail to make changes and the Great Resignation continues to draw millennials away from workplaces, there will be a staffing shortage in years to come, leaving organizations vulnerable to closing their doors (Bayraktar, 2022).

The Relation of Nonprofits and Millennials

Nonprofit organizations are nonbusiness entities that operate not-for-profit (Daniel & Anderson, 2021). The organizations operate to help communities in a variety of industries such as wildlife, education, healthcare, and many more (Prentice & Brudney, 2018). These organizations work to raise funds that they can use as return to benefit others in the community they have selected to sponsor. Each nonprofit organization focuses on social goals that they include as part of their mission statement, which is used as a guide for their social objectives (Sulhan, 2019). In relation to having social goals, the millennial generation looks for the organization in which they can be employed while making a social impact (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021). Millennials are looking for well-being in their workplaces, allowing them to have happiness, value, and learning opportunities. The millennial generation and nonprofit organizations, as referenced in Figure 4, operate in a confluence of perceived values for meaningful work, allowing them to have a shared mindset in the workplace (Henson, 2018). Figure 4 displays the confluence of the millennial generation and nonprofit organizations. The two are separate, but they are able to flow together as one, allowing the creation of a meaningful mindset.

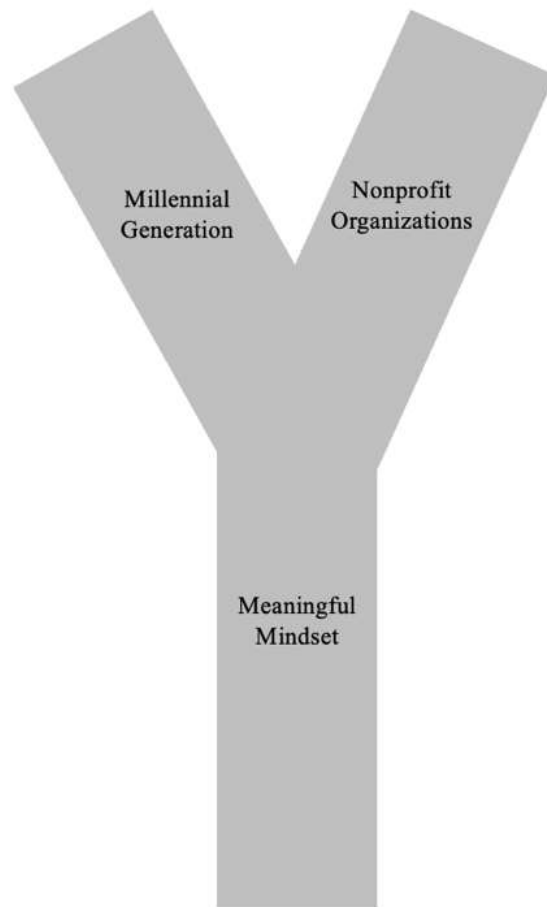
Common Mindset

The millennial generation has been found to have a new outlook on the workplace. They are no longer looking to just go to work; they are seeking to go beyond themselves (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021). Analyzing the idea of millennial employees wanting to work beyond themselves reflects the nonprofit sector. The nonprofit sector is in a different category than the for-profit sector because the work is to gain revenue by helping others. In contrast, for-profit organizations seek monetary revenue (Daniel & Anderson, 2021). One sector leads with the

understanding of care for the community, and the other leads with the idea of earnings (Dees & Anderson, 2017).

Figure 4

Confluence of Meaningful Mindset



Nonprofit organizations are in alliance with the good that millennials want to bring to the world (AbouAssi et al., 2021). In the nonprofit sector, the organizations have been divided into various areas to help those in need. A nonprofit can measure its success by the people it helped rather than the number in its bank account (Coupet & Berrett, 2019). Leaders of nonprofits are to establish a mission statement upon entering the sector that they are to uphold throughout their

work at the organization. This mission gives the organization a purpose, which is what millennials are searching for when it comes to their careers (Kunishige, 2021). Millennials want a career with a purpose, a purpose of giving back and making a difference in the world (Sweeney et al., 2019). The millennial generation and the nonprofit sector have brought light to a positive workplace relationship.

Working for a Purpose

All organizations, including for-profit organizations, and employees have a purpose for their work, but nonprofit organizations and their employees work for a purpose that is beyond themselves (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021). Each organization that is classified as a nonprofit goes through a vigorous process to ensure it is becoming an organization for a purpose (Daniel & Andersson, 2021). The nonprofit organization operates on the basis that they will not be using the funding that they receive for their own personal gain but for those who are in need (Dees & Anderson, 2017). Employees who work at nonprofit organizations have also been discovered to prefer the reward of their work to be presented in giving back to others rather than working for for-profit organizations (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021). The millennial generation is known for wanting more than just good pay; they want to have the reward of making a difference, which allows them to align with nonprofit organizations, and they have a common purpose (Kovic & Hänsli, 2018). Having purpose goes beyond having a job to complete; employees of nonprofit organizations provide the opportunity to help others in ways that for-profit organizations are unable to produce (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021). They are the guides for many people worldwide and make a difference in people's daily lives. They are pushing positivity through many organizations, allowing the millennials to contribute to that positivity when employed with the nonprofit organizations. Studies have shown that the

behaviors of the millennial generation display that they want to make a social impact, making them an excellent employee match with the nonprofit sector (Deloitte Global, 2022; Kovic & Hänsli, 2018; Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021).

Research Gaps

Commonalities were heavily present for working with a purpose and employee education concerning millennials and nonprofit organizations (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021). When conducting research for the comparison of a purpose, the studies only showed nonprofits as a sector. The nonprofit sector is comprised by a variety of diverse organizations, and it would be informative to know whether the different causes attracted more millennials than others (Prentice & Brudney, 2018). The lack of information prevents a more in-depth understanding of what attracts the employees to various organizations. More profound answers and more qualitative studies would allow for further understanding of the relationship concerning working for a purpose.

Theoretical Framework

This case study investigated effective millennial employee retention strategies for nonprofit organizations. To understand effective strategies, the case study was viewed through the lenses of millennial employees. The investigative research theory (Layder, 2018; Yin, 2009) and administrative theory (Hamilton, 2020; Tosi, 2009) provide the lens through which the results of data collected from millennials employed at a nonprofit organization were viewed. Organizational leaders of nonprofit organizations have the opportunity to examine the data and focus their strategies on how to best achieve effective millennial employee retention for their organizations.

Investigative Research Theory

Investigative research theory was used as the framework of the case study to explain effective millennial employee retention at nonprofit organizations. Investigative research centralizes its focus on the theory being crucial for research design and data collection in addition to detailed findings and conclusions (Layder, 2018). Investigative research relates evidence-based responses to social behavior with distinctive data collection strategies. According to investigative research theory, the most common method to conduct the research is through a case study because it allows interconnections with real life (Yin, 2009). Using a case study allowed responses to generate naturally from participants when they were asked interview questions. Case study research does not attempt to take control of variables in the study or artificially generate research scenarios as seen in the control of variables in experimental studies (Layder, 2018). Participants of this study were asked questions designed to let them organically form their responses and to allow the interviewer to ask follow-up questions as needed. Investigative research allowed the case study to come to fruition, discovering the understanding of effective millennial employee retention at nonprofit organizations.

The Administrative Theory

To gather further investigative research, the administrative theory (rational decision making-model) was used to support the study and its findings. The administrative theory was used by March and Simon (1958) as the first turnover model (Hamilton, 2020). The administrative theory allowed an understanding of the balance between the employee-employer relationship and the influence of determining turnover and retention. When employers seek to further understand how to retain employees, it is essential to understand the cause of turnover, which can be examined using the administrative theory. According to the theory, individuals are

faced with two different decisions about organizations, (a) decision to participate and (b) decision to produce (Tosi, 2009). The decision to participate focuses on the organizational equilibrium. To keep a balance, there needs to be a balance of payment to the employees for their participation and contribution to the organization. The theory demonstrates that employees will contribute to their organization if they feel that their organization is able to contribute back to them. A well-balanced organizational equilibrium consists of a positive balance of inducement utilities to decrease the individual's aspiration to move. Employee job satisfaction can be used as a determining factor of how they view the organization's equilibrium. The decision to produce relates to an organization's internal and external factors that disrupt employees' goals and values. Employees will not produce for an organization they feel will force them to compromise who they are or what they to achieve. Organizational pressures from the employer, leaders, or coworkers can affect an employee's decision to produce. The theory outlines the necessary balances needed in an organization to retain employees. If there is a balance allowing employees to have positive job satisfaction, they are more likely to continue working with the organization. The administrative theory contributed to the discovery of an understating of effective millennial employee retention at nonprofit organizations.

Summary

The literature review confirmed a connection between millennials and nonprofit organizations regarding positive employee retention. Even though there was a literature gap for a specific relationship between millennial employees, nonprofit organizations, and employee retention, there was an understanding of the variables concerning organization equilibrium. The literature clearly identified the factors millennials want to obtain from their workplace and the common mindset that nonprofit organizations present. The literature clarified the causes of

negative employee retention concerning the millennial generation. The millennial generation will be the majority of the workforce in the coming years causing there to be a necessity for nonprofit organization leaders to understand how to obtain effective millennial employee retention.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used in the qualitative case study and the steps taken to gather the data to provide an understanding of validation in the responses provided by participants. The data collection and analysis are detailed to clarify the proper use of the interviews and their responses. This chapter also includes any biases that were present with the researcher. The methodology outlines the steps the researcher used to discover how nonprofit organization leaders can obtain effective millennial employee retention at their organization in Southern California.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this case study was to discover retention strategies to influence an increase of the retention of millennial employees at a nonprofit in Southern California. Retention strategies are strategies that positively influence millennial employees to continue employment at nonprofit organizations.

Research Questions

To obtain an understanding of effective millennial employee retention strategies in the nonprofit sector, a case study was conducted using the investigative research theory (Layder, 2018; Yin, 2009) and administrative theory (Hamilton, 2020; Tosi, 2009). Data have been collected for the case study using the following research questions to guide the study:

- Q1: What are effective strategies that will positively impact retention of millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?
- Q2: What influence does a nonprofit organization's mission have on retaining millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?

Q3: What are practical organizational benefits that attract millennial employees to nonprofit organizations?

Protection of Human Subjects

The preferred nonprofit organization used in the study was verified as a registered 501(c)(3) through their publicly published IRS determination letter. According to public information on the preferred nonprofit organization's LinkedIn, the organization employs over 20 full-time employees with a minimum of 50% classifying as the millennial generation, which allowed the final sample to be anonymous. Once the organization agreed to participate in the study, a leader of the organization internally emailed details of the study and a request for millennial employee participation to all their employees. The employees who chose to volunteer remained anonymous from the organization to avoid persuasion or retaliation.

To protect the identity of the nonprofit organization and the participants included in the study, pseudonyms were used. The nonprofit organization was referenced as the organization, and the participants were referred to as numbered responders.

To obtain, use, and publish the information that was provided by the responders, a consent form was acknowledged before collecting any data from the participants. Prior to the study, the organization confirmed in writing that (a) information provided by the organization's employees could be published and (b) there would not be bias against millennial employees at the organization because of responses provided during the study. Leaders and employees of the organization responded under the pseudonyms for each participant as published in this case study.

The nonprofit organization used in this study was a previous employer of the researcher. The researcher had not been employed with the organization for over a year; however, some of

the researcher's past colleagues were employees still employed at the organization. The researcher emphasized to participants that they should not allow any prior working relationship between the researcher and participants to influence their responses.

Research Design

The case study research method was used to discover whether there is a shared mindset between the millennial generation employees and nonprofit organization employers. Qualitative research uses open-ended questions, allowing participants to respond with personal influence (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The qualitative research study was conducted using investigative research theory through a case study. In a case study, the research focus is to develop an in-depth description and analysis of a specific case or a variety of cases. Yin (2009) defined the following five core elements of case study research: (a) focus on a specific case, (b) allowing for the study to occur in natural contexts, (c) studies that are bounded, (d) studies completed in-depth, and (e) studies using multiple sources. For this study, there was only one case that studied millennial employees at one nonprofit organization. The research problem for case studies was to find an in-depth understanding of the case or cases (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study discovered effective employee retention strategies for millennial employees at a nonprofit in Southern California. Through the use of a qualitative case study, there was a discovery to provide nonprofit organizational leaders with strategies to obtain effective millennial employee retention at their organizations in Southern California.

Population

The population for the study included millennial employees of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Southern California. The sample was drawn from one nonprofit organization to understand specific factors in the same environment for employee retention of

multiple millennial employees. A nonprofit was selected for the study through the convenience of location and knowledge of a millennial chief executive officer who promotes millennial employment.

To gather the necessary millennial employee participants for the study, a request for participation was sent to the leadership of the preferred nonprofit organization located in Southern California. The selected nonprofit organization was verified as a registered 501(c)(3) by the researcher. To protect their employees, a leader of the organization initiated the request of participants of their organization, allowing all employees to be aware of the study conducted. The participants were verified by organizational leaders that they were employees of the registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

The organization's leadership was provided with an email outlining the requested generational participants for the study and a weblink from the researcher that was used to communicate with the organization's employees. The link directed prospective participants to a consent form to participate in the study. Once consent was given, the participants were directed to a screening survey to verify their eligibility for the study. The survey requested information regarding their employment status, employment length, and generation classification. If the employee met the requirements, they continued to fill out contact information to participate in the study. Information on the next steps of participation in the study were sent to the employee-provided email address.

Sample

The sample for this study was determined by the millennial employees who volunteered to participate in the study after receiving details of the study and participant requirements were internally distributed at the 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Southern California. For the

study, the selected organization has been recognized as a 501(c)(3) by the IRS for a minimum of 15 years. The organization that participated in this study was determined as a 501(c)(3) in 1983. The preferred sample for the case study was a minimum of five millennial employees; however, it depended on the participants who met the requirements and completed the interview process.

Once employees decided to participate, they filled out a screening form provided by the researcher through the organization using a web link. The screening survey form confirmed the following requirements were met:

- The employee was employed with the nonprofit organization full-time.
- The employee had been employed with the organization for a minimum of 1 year.
- The employee's birth year was between 1981 and 1995, classifying them as a member of the millennial generation.
- The employee agreed and consented to participate in the study, which involved a recorded interview using the video conferencing tool, Zoom, and third-party audio transcription. The recordings were stored by the researcher using password-protected accounts.

If the employees completed the screening form and aligned with the study's restrictions, they were emailed an outline of the next steps for the study. Once the survey was complete, the employees were sent an email inviting them to schedule their interviews, which were conducted using the video conferencing tool, Zoom. The participants had 1 week to schedule their interview times through the researcher-provided scheduling software, Calendly. The study's final sample was the millennial employees of the nonprofit organization in Southern California who met the study requirement and completed the Zoom interview.

Instrumentation

In relation to the qualitative method being used, interviews were used as the form of data collection for the study. To allow the interviewer to control the questioning, interviews were conducted virtually one-on-one via Zoom and were recorded (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participants were interviewed over a 1-week period of time and provided a variety of times to allow for a private Zoom meeting. Participants were required to show the room they were in once they joined the Zoom meeting to demonstrate they were the only ones attending the interview to prevent influence on their responses. Employee participants were alone for their interviews to ensure there were no influences, which promoted natural responses.

Data Collection

The researcher collected data through a virtual interview with the participants via the Zoom platform. Interviews were recorded through the Zoom platform, which provided a video recording and transcription of the interview. The Zoom interviews were scheduled for 30 min to allow the participant to have sufficient time to answer each question.

To keep the interviews on schedule, an interview protocol was used. The interview started with the researcher asking the participant to confirm they were the only person present for the recorded interview. After confirming the participant was alone, the researcher briefly introduced the study and an interview outline preparing the responder for the coming questions. The questions started with the interviewee being asked what initially attracted them to apply to the nonprofit organization. The researcher asked the interview questions as listed in order; however, the order was fluid as needed with responses. To gather additional support for the interviewee's answers, follow-up questions were asked as outlined in interview protocol. Once all the research questions had been asked and quality responses had been received, the researcher

finished the interview with closing instructions. The closing instructions showed appreciation to the participants and provided information on the study's next steps and an estimated date of when the collected data were to be analyzed and the results shared (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Interviews recorded by the Zoom platform were backed up to the researcher's hard drive after each completed interview. The interviews were organized in individual files under the numbered responder to prevent any crossing of information. The interviews remained unviewed until all the respondents had completed their interviews to prevent the researcher from asking probing questions influenced by other responders. The data were analyzed when the interviews were complete.

Data Analysis

To properly assess the data, the five-step process for qualitative research was used (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The data were first organized and prepared by downloading the interview video and transcriptions from the Zoom platform. The researcher reviewed the Zoom transcriptions as the Zoom interview was viewed ensuring there were no gaps in the information. Once the transcripts had been confirmed as accurate by the researcher, the data were analyzed. The data were then coded using descriptive coding according to participant responses. Once coded, themes were created to find commonalities among participants. Finally, the themes were represented in a manner that allowed the data to be understood by others.

Step 1: Organize and Prepare the Data

Once all the interviews had been completed, there were hours of responses to review. The Zoom recordings were downloaded with the Zoom-provided transcripts. The video recordings were transcribed and compared, providing accurate data.

Step 2: Review the Data

Once the transcripts were confirmed as accurate, the researcher entered the information into NVivo, a qualitative analysis software. All data provided throughout the process were examined to ensure no gaps in the information.

Step 3: Code the Data

After all the data were reviewed, the information was sectioned into chunks and categorized under particular categories (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Step 4: Create Themes

The data being sectioned into different codes allowed common themes to be found. In each code, the responses were compared to discover similar answers. The data were analyzed to discover themes that supported the understanding of obtaining effective millennial employee retention for nonprofit leaders at their organizations in Southern California.

Step 5: Represent the Themes

Presenting the themes allowed the data to be understood by others. In this process, common themes were put together to create the context for the study results. To better show the themes, charts also represented the different commonalities from the interviews. Because of the qualitative research, the charts used showed an overall percentage from the data rather than quantitative numbers. Presenting the themes created the foundation of understanding of how nonprofit leaders can obtain effective millennial employee retention at their organizations in Southern California.

Design and Instrument Limitations

The design and instrument for the study allowed rich data to be collected from multiple participants through a detailed process. The research questions were reviewed with a senior

leader of the participating nonprofit organization who met the inclusion criteria but did not serve as a participant in the study but did ensure clarity of the interview questions. The senior leader is considered an expert in nonprofit leadership with over a decade of experience working in the nonprofit sector in addition to a minimum of 5 years in senior leadership positions at the participating organization. Once question clarity was confirmed by the senior leader, the study interviews were scheduled. Virtual interviews were the instrument of the study providing the opportunity of open-ended answers and allowing for diverse responses from millennial employees of the participating nonprofit organization. Limitations arose because of the sample size of the study. The study had a target of five participants from an organization of approximately 20 employees. The interview questions were reviewed by a senior leader of the nonprofit organization who met the inclusion criteria but did not serve as a participant in the study to ensure clarity of the interview questions. Because of the limited sample size, the generalization of the findings is limited. The nonprofit organization used in the study is located in California, which may limit the generalization of the findings to organizations in other states. Although limitations were present in the study, the findings from this study could inform similar studies conducted in other areas (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Personal Bias

A personal bias does resonate with the researcher and the topic of study. The researcher shares similar factors with the participants of the study. The researcher was previously employed with the nonprofit organization in the study for over 2 years. However, the researcher removed themselves as an employee in the nonprofit sector a year before the study was conducted. As a millennial, the researcher feels there is a natural employee-employer fit with nonprofit organizations and millennial employees. The study was completed to understand how nonprofit

leaders can obtain effective millennial employee retention at their nonprofit organizations. The interviewer followed proper steps to develop best practices from the data presented by participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Summary

The case study included one nonprofit organization located in Southern California and at least five millennial employees. Investigative research was conducted to ask the millennial employees for their perspective to understand effective employee retention between their generation and nonprofit organizations. The participants provided their opinion through virtual interviews. After the data were collected and analyzed, the understanding of how nonprofit organization leaders can obtain effective millennial employee retention for their organization in Southern California was discovered.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

This chapter provides a clear explanation of the steps taken to collect data from participants at a nonprofit organization in Southern California. The chapter reviews the purpose of the study and expresses the methods used to gather data. The interview process is shared in detail and includes a description of the participants and their career journey within the organization. After reviewing actions of the research process, the researcher presents themes of findings. The themes presented are related to discovering how nonprofit organization leaders can obtain effective millennial employee retention at their organization in Southern California.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this case study was to discover retention strategies to influence an increase of the retention of millennial employees at a nonprofit in Southern California. Retention strategies are strategies that positively influence millennial employees to continue employment at nonprofit organizations.

Research Questions

To discover and understand the effective retention strategies of millennials in the nonprofit sector, a case study was conducted at a nonprofit organization in Southern California. The case study was guided by the investigative research theory (Layder, 2018) and the administrative theory (Tosi, 2009). Data were collected through millennial employee participants for the case study to answer the following research questions:

Q1: What are effective strategies that will positively impact retention of millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?

Q2: What influence does a nonprofit organization's mission have on retaining millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?

Q3: What are practical organizational benefits that attract millennial employees to nonprofit organizations?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

To conduct the study properly and with accuracy, precise steps were followed from the start of connecting with the organization to the time of analyzing the data. While conducting the study, it was key to pay attention to details of any size to gather all the necessary data to answer the research question. To stay in sync with the needs of the research methods, the methods of Creswell and Poth (2018) were used, allowing the interviews to be gathered and structure data. In addition to Creswell and Poth, the analyzing methods of Braun and Clarke (2022) were used to create clear visuals of the results as well as formulate effective themes.

Preparing With Leadership

To confirm there would be clarity in the interview questions with the participants, an organization leader with over 10 years of continual employment reviewed the questions. A Zoom meeting was conducted between the researcher and the organization leader in which minimal changes were recommended to the interview questions. The changes allowed clarity in the questions leading to a seamless interview process with the employees. After the changes to the questions were confirmed with the organization leader and human resources representative, the researcher was able to continue to gathering participants.

Gathering Participants

To accurately gather data for the case study, participants had to meet the following inclusion criteria. The sample for the study was comprised of full time employees who had been employed with the nonprofit organization for a minimum of 1 year in addition to being a member of the millennial generation, someone born from 1981 to 1995. To protect the privacy of the

organization's employees, an email was administrated through the human resources department inviting millennial employees to participate. The organization sent the email to all its staff allowing there to be clarity of the study while keeping the identities of millennial employees who may have been interested in participating anonymous. After the email was sent, participants filled out the case study screening tool, which confirmed their birth year, employment type, and employment length. The screening tool was also used as the participants informed consent (see Appendix A) for the study. After the researcher reviewed the volunteered applicants confirming eligibility (see Appendix B), the volunteers were invited to sign up for a Zoom interview for the case study. The official participants were those who scheduled and completed the study interview, leading to five participants.

Participant Details

All participants of the study were millennial full-time employees who had been employed with the nonprofit organization for a minimum of 1 year. Even though the participants all fit the parameters of the study, they had variety in their birth years as well as length of employment with the organization, as seen in Figure 5 and Figure 6.

Figure 5 shows that all five participants in the study were born in a different year falling in the millennial range of year-year. The birth years of the participants were 1982, 1984, 1989, 1990, and 1993. The diversity in birth years allowed efficient data to be collected from employees throughout the timespan of the millennial generation.

The employees who participated in this study were able to provide retention insight on a variety of years, and employment ranged continually from 2 years to over 10 years of employment (see Figure 6). The variation of employment length was informative during the

Figure 5

Participant Birth Years

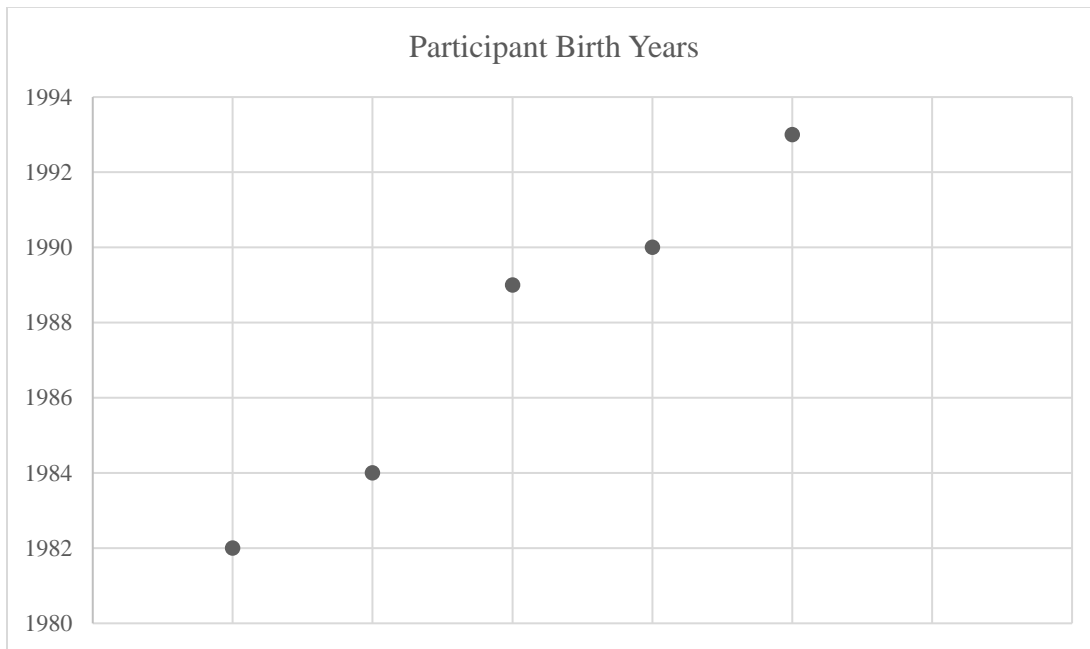
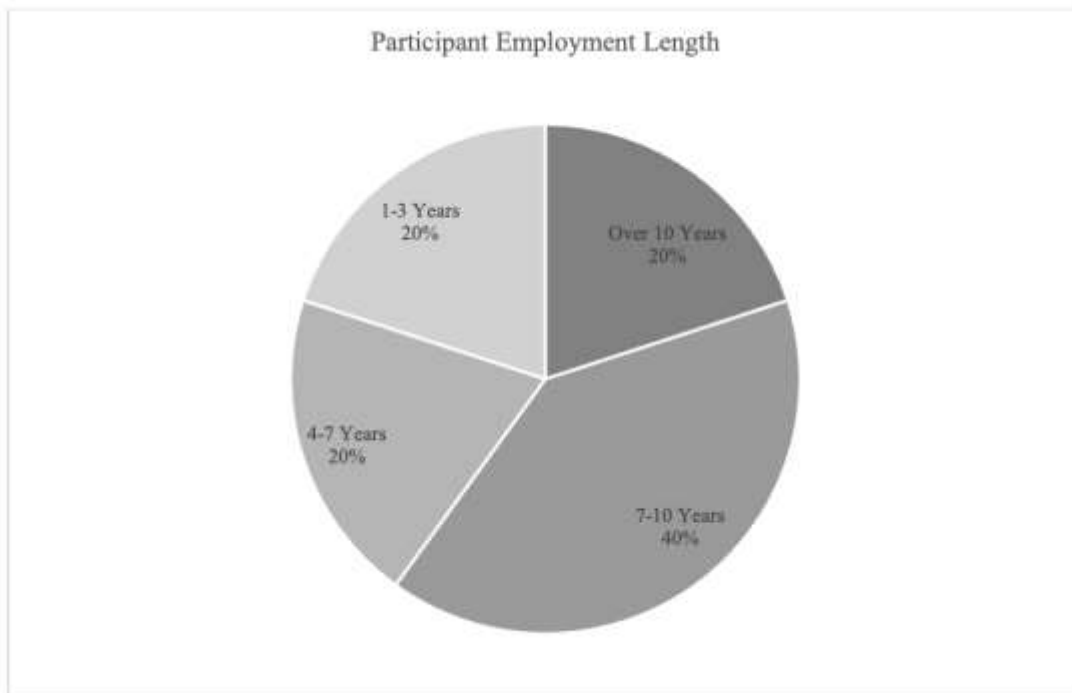


Figure 6

Participant Employment Length With Nonprofit Organization



interview process because their responses were able to include organizational changes that occurred over the time of their employment and the effect those changes had on them.

Figure 5 shows the years of retention of the participants at the nonprofit organization in Southern California. The figure shows that 40% of the participants had been with the organization for 7 to 10 years. Employment lengths of 1 to 3 years, 4 to 7 years, and over 10 years each were fulfilled by 20% of the participants.

Conducting the Interview

Interviews were scheduled over a week time span and conducted through the Zoom software system. The participants were provided a variety of times throughout the week, allowing them to select a meeting time that aligned with their schedule. The researcher joined each Zoom meeting 5 min before the start of the meeting time to confirm the transcription feature in English was turned on and the video recording was prepared to start on demand after the interview introduction. Each interview began with a set introduction that included the following:

- a researcher introduction,
- confirmation that the subject was in a private space by themselves,
- a brief synopsis of the study and informed consent, and
- a reminder that the interview would be recorded and to refrain from using the organization's name in responses in case the transcripts had to be sent to a third party for transcription.

Once the introduction was complete, the participants were informed that the researcher would be starting the recording. Once the recording began, the Zoom application announced that the recording had started and the interview questions were asked (see Appendix C). The

interviews were scheduled for 30 min, and all five interviews were completed within the designated time frame. After the interview questions were completed, the researcher ended the recording, causing the Zoom application to announce that the recording had been ended. Participants were thanked, and they were informed that they could contact the researcher if they had any questions or concerns about their participation.

The interviews were conducted efficiently, and question clarification was limited. The ability to have the organization leader review the questions prior to the interview allowed there to be a better understanding of the purpose of questions when asked in the individual interviews. After each interview was complete, the researcher confirmed the video recording and the Zoom created transcripts were saved.

Reviewing the Data

After all the interviews were recorded, steps were taken to clearly organize the data to find commonalities among the participant responses. The steps took place in five phases—organize and prepare the data, review the data, code the data, create themes, and represent the themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Step 1: Organize and Prepare the Data

After the interviews were conducted, the Zoom video recordings and transcripts were saved to a secured location. Each interview had its own folder titled “Participant” followed by a number between 1 and 5. After all interviews were completed, the researcher compared the Zoom transcripts to the video recordings to confirm accuracy. The researcher was able to review the transcripts, which had minimal mistypes ruling out the need for a transcription vendor.

Step 2: Review the Data

After the transcripts were confirmed as accurate, they were uploaded into the software system NVivo, a qualitative analysis software. The transcripts were imported into the software by participant for the data to be reviewed clearly. The researcher organized each interview into its own tab in the software system allowing the data to be reviewed without confusion. The researcher reviewed the data and made note of the common themes that arose among the participant responses.

Step 3: Code the Data

After all interview responses were reviewed, the researcher transitioned to coding the data in NVivo. Returning to the beginning, the researcher reviewed the responses and organized the data into designated categories corresponding to the interview question. The responses from each participant were categorized under the interview question to allow for themes between answers to be easily identified.

Step 4: Create Themes

The researcher organized the data into question-related codes, allowing data to further be organized into themes by adding subcategories to the coded sections. The responses to each question by multiple participants were efficiently organized to present themes with clarity. Analysis of the themes supported the understanding of obtaining effective millennial employee retention for nonprofit leaders at their organizations in Southern California.

Step 5: Represent the Themes

Themes discovered through the interview data were organized into clear representations influenced by Braun and Clarke's (2022) model of thematic analysis to allow for an understanding of the information. The information was shared through constructive charts and

graphs in addition to practical summaries for nonprofit leaders to gain a successful understanding of the research results. The represented themes will be able to translate to opportunities for nonprofit organizations in Southern California to obtain effective millennial employee retention.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Data collected through the interviews with the millennial employees of a nonprofit organization in Southern California allowed understanding of how leadership can strategize to retain millennial nonprofit employees. The understanding was found through three main research questions that were broken into interview questions to receive clarified responses. The results collected provide insight into leadership of nonprofit organizations.

After reviewing the data gained through the interview questions, the thematic analysis method from Braun and Clarke (2022) was used to guide a clear presentation of the findings. Braun and Clark's methods focus on breaking down the information into maps and charts displaying detailed yet simplified results. Through the application of the method to the study, five main themes were discovered that provide insight regarding the research questions. The five themes show a relation of what the millennial generation is looking for in their roles related to advancement, philanthropy, education, work-life balance, and a healthy work environment from their organization (see Table 2).

The creating themes map breaks down the five themes discovered in the study into their subthemes (see Figure 7). After reviewing the transcripts from the interviews, the following five themes were discovered: advancement, philanthropic, education, work-life balance, and work environment. To create validity for each theme, multiple subthemes were discovered with support from multiple participant responses.

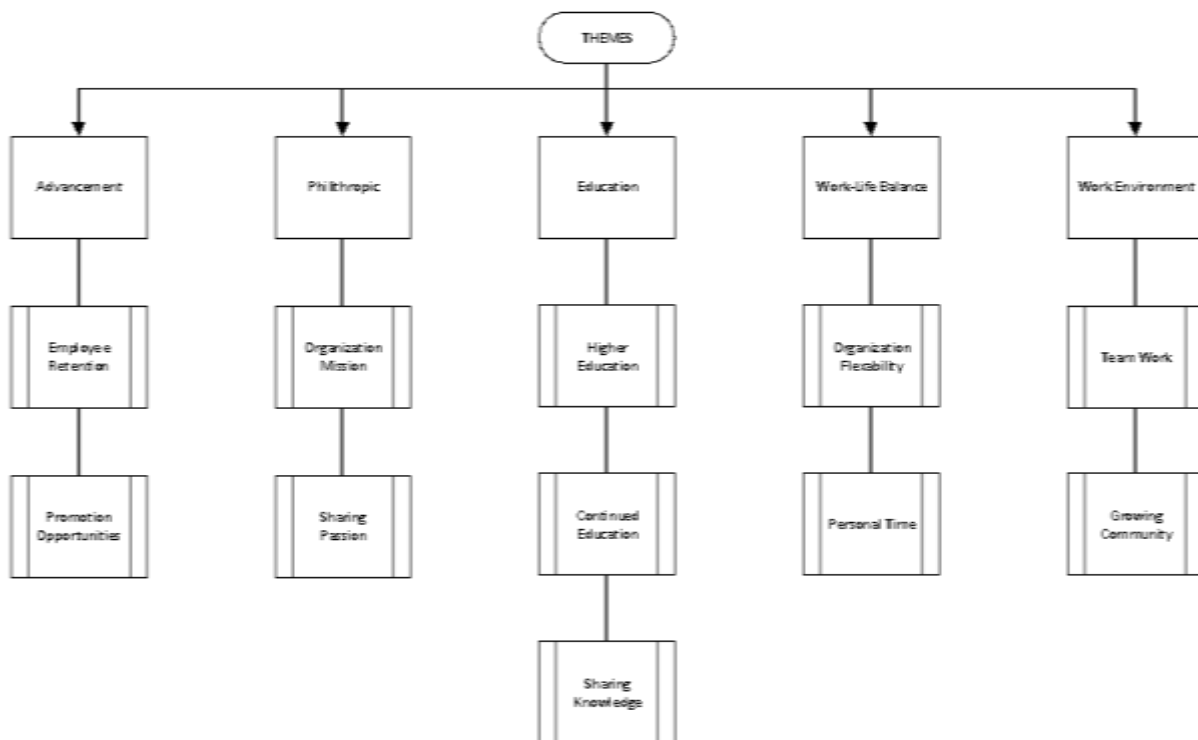
Table 2

Participant Response Themes and Characteristics

Theme	Characteristic
Advancement	Advancing of employees within the organization.
Philanthropic	Shared value to execute the nonprofit mission.
Education	Employee educational growth with support of workplace.
Work-life balance	Balance provided to employees between personal and professional lives.
Work environment	Elements that make up the surroundings of the workplace.

Figure 7

Creating Themes Map



Advancement

The millennial employees are looking for a workplace that is able to provide them opportunities for growth. Throughout the interviews, the participants shared that the nonprofit organization had a focus on employee advancement in their organization. The employees were excited and shared in detail their experiences working with the organization and how it had influenced their careers in the positions they currently held. The interviews involved employees of a variety of departments and employment lengths, yet they all focused on their career journeys with the organization leading to their retention.

Employee Retention

The participants of the study held long retention rates with the organization, and 80% had worked at the organization for 7 years or longer. The remaining 20% discussed their growth plan with the organization and how they plan to stay with the organization for as long as possible. The organization allowed its employees to feel welcomed, leading them to want to stay for more than a position. Regarding the longevity of employee retention, Respondent 4 shared, “Passion and dedication to the organization ... you can see that through the longevity of a lot of our employees and how long that they’ve been working at the organization.” The participants recognized that the nonprofit organization aligned with shared values such as community, which allows there to be a shared feeling of loyalty.

Promotion Opportunities

Loyalty can be seen not only by employees but the organization as well. The organization is able to show commitment to its employees through promotion opportunities. Respondent 2 explained that their career grew over time through opportunities the organization presented: “The opportunities just kept on growing, and so I sort of just kept on pursuing them.” Millennial

employees who worked for the organization for 7 or more years held a minimum of three positions and planned to grow further in their careers with the nonprofit.

Participants of leadership positions specified that when they seek to fill positions in the organization, they work to promote within if the opportunity is available. It was discussed that different department leaders come together to promote positions to employees across sectors, allowing positive growth. A millennial leader expressed that it can be hard to see an employee they hired into the organization leave their team, but being able to see them grow and thrive in a new position at the organization is an honor. Multiple participants shared that their career journey grew in a positive manner because of the nonprofit organization giving them opportunities outside of their comfort zone, but they found a passion for their roles. Respondent 5 shared, “Opportunities are there. If you show that you want to do more, then they’ll find, especially here, they’ll find space, and I even witnessed that with people on my own team.” The nonprofit has allowed millennial employees to grow from entry level positions to senior leadership positions while carrying positive retention.

Philanthropic

The basis of a nonprofit organization is philanthropy, and the millennial employees share the principle. When discussing the shared value of giving back to the community, the participants expressed the value they find with the mission of the organization. The organizational goals for the millennials working at the organization measure their success by the capability of forwarding the nonprofit’s mission.

Organization Mission

The nonprofit sector is a different arrangement than an organization that is working for a profit. When it came to recruiting millennial employees, the feature of being a nonprofit

organization and having a mission to give back is what initially attracted the majority of the employees to apply. A participant shared they were recommended by a mentor to apply for a position. It was not something they had initially considered, but after looking into the purpose of the organization, they found they shared a common goal with the effects they could have on the community.

Sharing Passion

Throughout the interviews, it was clear there was a passion shared between millennial employees and the work they were able to do at the nonprofit. The participants specifically discussed that what they do for their career at the nonprofit is something they have a passion for beyond a job. Respondent 4 shared,

You can tell that everybody that's there wants to be there and is working towards the same goal. I mean, that's what's kind of cool about a nonprofit organization; is that there's one mission and every person's role is contributing to that mission of the organization.

They work to create an experience for the community through their careers, which allows them to find fulfillment through philanthropy.

Education

Education can be perceived in many ways in the workplace; some consider what an employee brings to the organization, and others see what the employee has to offer and work with them to grow even more. Throughout the interviews, multiple participants brought up their college education and how working for the nonprofit organization was a benefit to them furthering their studies. The participants informed the researcher that knowledge was a passion of the nonprofit organization, and the leaders encouraged their employees to earn higher

education degrees as well as additional certifications. The participants were able to enrich their minds with the support of their employer.

Higher Education

Higher education in the nonprofit sector has many different benefits not only offered by organizations but by schools and governments as well. Many colleges and universities in the United States are nonprofit entities, and some choose to partner with other nonprofit organizations to provide more opportunities for continued education for the employees. The United States government has the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program that some nonprofit employees are eligible to apply for after 10 years in the sector, depending on whether they used federal loans to assist in their education. Higher education is encouraged throughout the nonprofit sector, but the millennial employees expressed the encouragement their nonprofit has had on their continued education.

During the interviews, Respondent 5 expressed excitement about the achievement they were able to accomplish with the support of the nonprofit organization. The participant explained that they were able to complete graduate school while working full time with the organization. The nonprofit organization has an education program that allows employees to feel encouraged to pursue their education goals. The millennial employees were able to receive their degrees and continue to grow their careers with the nonprofit organization.

Continued Education

Continued education and knowledge can come in many forms. At the nonprofit organization in Southern California, employees have grown through knowledge being shared in multiple forms, such as certifications, trainings, lectures, and conferences. All five participants

spoke about the education opportunities they have had while working at the nonprofit organization. Respondent 3 expressed the dedication the organization had to their growth:

They put in a lot of effort into growing me as a professional. So, they put in the hours getting me classes, and I went to different academies to raise my professionalism, especially in the field that I'm in.

The millennials who participated in the study expressed that the opportunities they have been exposed to are a big highlight of working at the nonprofit organization. The nonprofit organization has shown that education and experience are things they value for their employees no matter what position they hold in the organization.

Sharing Knowledge

The nonprofit organization has not only instilled continuing to gain knowledge in their employees but also the sharing of knowledge by employees. Participants shared that they had the opportunity to share their knowledge not only with their community but also with people from around the world. The organization hosts events and lectures to share knowledge with others. The opportunity to share knowledge has led to multiple employees traveling distances and allowing them to have new career experiences. Education is a value of the nonprofit organization, and the millennial employees are able to embrace not only learning but also teaching.

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance allows employees to be able to have a focus not only on their work but also on their personal lives as well. The nonprofit organization has allowed employees not only to work toward achieving goals in their careers but also to find success in their own endeavors. From traveling to new places or starting a family, the organization provides time and flexibility

to its employees. The millennial generation focuses on their careers to allow them to find happiness with work–life balance. Organizations providing the opportunity for work–life balance show a commitment to their employees’ well-being.

Organization Flexibility

The opportunity to share knowledge has led to multiple employees traveling distances and allowing them to have new career experiences. Even though all participants worked full time, they found time to follow their passion outside of their professional life. The participants focused on being able to have time with family and to continue education. If they were in a situation when they needed to adjust their schedules, the organization would work with them accordingly. Millennial employees seek to be trusted in the workplace, and the nonprofit organization in Southern California can fulfill that need.

Having a family and being a working parent can be a challenging task. Sixty percent of the participants in the study are full time working parents. The participants shared that the flexibility to be able to work from home some days during the week has made a positive impact on their family lives. Respondent 4 shared,

Given the flexibility to be able to work remotely sometimes, and able to pick them up from school, go to a sporting event, or anything like that is huge for myself and a lot of actually the employees that I have on my team.

The working parents, including Respondent 4, reported that being able to adjust their schedules to pick up their children from school or attend their sports games is a reward of their workplace that they hold with great gratitude.

Personal Time

The nonprofit not only has a focus on flexibility but also offers their employees paid time off that allows them to connect with their families or engage in personal activities. Having time off outside of the standard evenings and weeks during the week is a custom that the millennial generation enjoys allowing them to find the balance between their work and personal lives. The employees feel comfortable taking their time off at the organization and stated that having a personal life is something that the nonprofit encourages for their employees.

Work Environment

When questioned about the nonprofit work environment, the majority of the participants specifically mentioned the genuine relationships they have been able to build with their colleagues. Because the nonprofit organization has a high retention rate, it possesses values that are shared between the employees. The employees work together to create a positive environment not only for themselves but also for those around them.

Teamwork

Teamwork frequently was expressed by the participants of the study. Respondent 1 stated, “We all have a common goal of advancing the mission ... that creates a lot of teamwork, when you all have that same goal.” Nonprofit organizations have many moving parts to accomplish their mission, which could not be done without the dedication of the employees. The nonprofit organization often hosts events that lead to a blend of departments coming together to give back to the community. They have all had the opportunity to meet a variety of people throughout their careers with the organization, and they appreciate having close teammates to share valuable moments. Another participant called attention to the fact that teamwork is present

whether they are in the office or working from home, showing that the treasured work environment exists beyond their offices.

Growing Community

When participants were asked what more their organization could do, the answers came back to doing more as a team. Even though they spend so much time together during the day, they find it nice to be able to bond and catch up outside of the office. One participant mentioned team building activities the organization used to do, but because of coronavirus and workplace restrictions, they were postponed. The employees of this organization take time to value those around them, leading to a growth in their organization community. Interviewees desiring to spend more time with their peers at the organization held a variety of positions, including leadership roles. The nonprofit organization has created a work environment that allows the employees to enjoy their surroundings.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this case study was to discover retention strategies to influence an increase in the retention of millennial employees at a nonprofit in Southern California. Retention strategies are strategies that positively influence millennial employees to continue employment at nonprofit organizations. To effectively understand millennial employee retention strategies in the nonprofit sector, a qualitative case study was conducted with the support of the investigative research theory (Layder, 2018) and administrative theory (Tosi, 2009). Data were collected for the case study using the following research questions to outline the study:

- Q1: What are effective strategies that will positively impact retention of millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?
- Q2: What influence does a nonprofit organization's mission have on retaining millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?
- Q3: What are practical organizational benefits that attract millennial employees to nonprofit organizations?

The population for the case study was millennial employees at a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Southern California. To gather participants for the study, a verified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Southern California was contacted and consented to participate. The researcher worked with a representative at the nonprofit organization to notify all employees at the organization of the study and to invite employees who met the study requirements to volunteer. After the participants were verified as meeting the study requirements and scheduled their Zoom interviews, the sample was determined. The sample for the study was five millennial employees, employees born between 1981 and 1995, who worked full-time for

the nonprofit organization for a minimum of 1 year and consented to participate in the study. The parameters set for the participants allowed there to be relevant feedback from their interviews.

One-on-one interviews were conducted between the participants and researcher, which allowed responses to be void of influence from peers. Once the interviews were completed, data analysis was done using the five-step process for qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher started the data analysis by reviewing the Zoom transcripts compared to the Zoom Interview videos to confirm the transcripts were credible. After confirming the accuracy of the transcripts, the data were entered into NVivo, qualitative analysis software. Using the software, the data were organized into categories and then classified into themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Themes were supported through responses from multiple participants presenting key findings to create the foundation of understanding of how nonprofit leaders can obtain effective millennial employee retention at their organizations in Southern California.

Significant Findings

After analyzing the data, five main themes were found to support an effective understanding of millennial employee retention strategies at the nonprofit organization. The five themes discovered were advancement, philanthropic, education, work–life balance, and work environment. Each of the five themes found aligned with the purpose of the study.

Concerning advancement, employees were able to express the opportunities of growth and advancement at the organization. The interviewees shared their experience of growth at the nonprofit organization; 80% of them had been employed for 7 years or longer and held multiple positions during their time of employment with the organization. The employees expressed that the nonprofit organization focused on promoting within, so if there were areas of growth in other parts of the organization, leaders would recommend employees they felt would benefit from the

opportunity. Providing growth opportunities for employees in turn increased employee retention with the organization.

Philanthropic opportunities have a great significance to the nonprofit sector, allowing opportunities for employees and organizations to give back to the community. The organization has a mission to follow, which can impact the interest of employees, and that was found to be true during the interviews. During the interviews, participants confirmed that having a passion for giving back has had an impact on their career with the organization. Over 50% of the employees who were interviewed expressed that the organization being a nonprofit was one of the deciding factors in them initially applying.

Throughout the interviews, the participants expressed that the nonprofit focused not only on improving the community but also on the employees' growth through education. Knowledge was a passion for the nonprofit organization, and the participants noted that the organization encouraged employees to continue their learning through higher education and certifications. One interviewee shared their experience of earning a graduate degree, which was stressful while working full time, and they were encouraged by the nonprofit organization, which pushed them to further success and degree completion. Other respondents shared their experiences with continued education in which they had the opportunity to participate because of the organization. Throughout all the interviews, it was clear that a shared passion for knowledge was shared between the millennial employees and the nonprofit organization.

Work-life balance and having a healthy work environment have been positive benefits the nonprofit organization has been able to offer their employees. Employees continuing their higher education while working full time revealed that there is an opportunity for work-life balance at the organization. Sixty percent of the interviewees worked full-time while being a

parent and expressed the opportunity of having flexibility in their schedule, such as working from home some days, provided a positive impact on their family life. Being a working parent can be stressful, but the nonprofit organization has provided a healthy environment for unexpected events in personal schedules. The nonprofit organization also provided opportunities for employees to have planned time off, allowing employees to engage in personal activities outside of working hours. Having the ability to use the personal time off is something the nonprofit organization encouraged their employees to further impact a positive work–life balance.

The work environment of the nonprofit organization was indicated by interviewees through having genuine relationships with their colleagues. When the employees were asked what they would want to see more of in the organization, all the respondents placed their focus on team activities. There are many different departments within the organization that frequently intersect in their roles, but they enjoy taking time to get to know their peers outside of their standard workday. The nonprofit organization has priority in growing the community internally. Although COVID-19 postponed the opportunity of team building activities, the millennial employees are looking forward to the traditions returning. Through responses, it has been presented that the nonprofit organization gives the opportunity to their employees to feel welcome and enjoy their work surroundings.

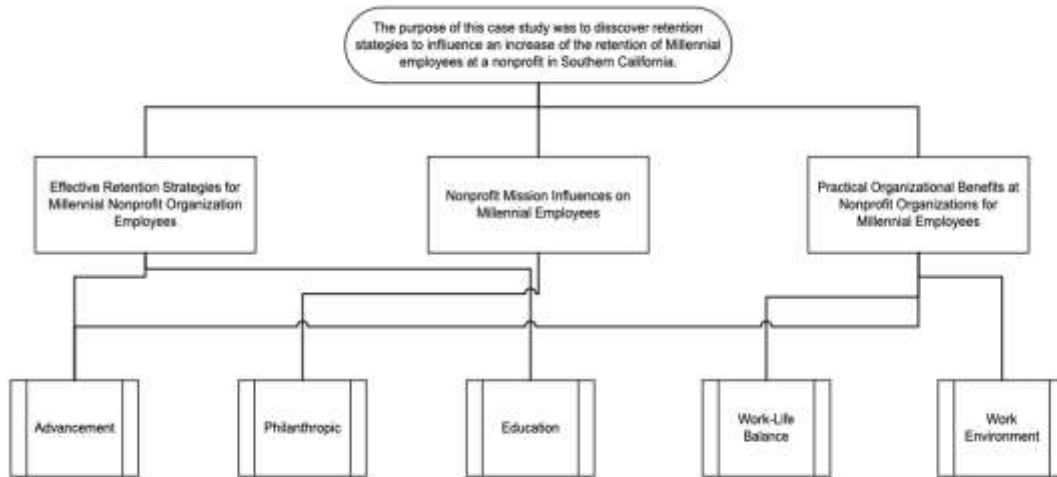
Conclusions

After reviewing and analyzing the data from the interviews, the research questions were able to be supported. The millennial employees who participated in the study used their experiences at the nonprofit organization to discover effective retention strategies, nonprofit mission influence, and practical organizational benefits at the nonprofit organization. In Figure 8,

the findings of the study are outlined from the purpose of the case study to the relation to the research questions and themes discovered in the study providing support.

Figure 8

Nonprofit Millennial Retention Strategies Outline



Effective Retention Strategies for Millennial Nonprofit Organization Employees

Through the themes discovered in the interviews, the researcher found related strategies that could be used to have effective retention for millennial employees at nonprofit organizations. All five themes could be used as effective retention strategies. Advancement was the highest supported theme regarding retention. Research has shown that the millennial generation looks for a challenge in their work, leading them to yearn for advancement (Deloitte Global, 2022). Eighty percent of the participants have held three or more positions during their time of employment within the nonprofit organization. The same 80% hold a retention time frame between 7 to 14 years of employment with the nonprofit organization. The remaining 20% planned to have growth with the organization leading them to have years of retention. The

nonprofit organization has broken the trend known by millennials to job-hop every 2 years. They are able to change jobs within the organization because of advancement opportunities (AbouAssi et al., 2021).

The organization allowed development of their employees in addition to advancement. Promoting self-development through education and learning experiences is a contributing factor to the high retention rate of the nonprofit organization. The interviewees focused on their opportunities for knowledge growth and the impact they had on the positions the millennial employees held. One participant of the study referenced a training they had participated in during their employment and the perspective it gave them as they continued to grow with the organization, leading them to currently hold a leadership position. Development is a value to the millennial generation and needs to be used as a strategy for retention.

Providing work–life balance, specifically flexibility, to the employees has also had a vital impact as a retention strategy. In all five interviews, flexibility was a key word that was used. Employees of the nonprofit organization appreciated flexibility because it showed that they are seen as valued employees. The organization expressed that their employees matter as individuals, and there is an understanding that at times, life happens and not everything can be planned for, so there is peace of mind that employees experience because of the opportunity for flexibility.

Knowing that their workplace is a safe space integrates as a retention strategy regarding millennial employment. Teamwork by definition is known as collaboration between a group of people. Teamwork may sometimes be a requirement, but at the nonprofit organization, teamwork is often a choice to allow for better output at the organization. During the interviews, the millennial employees expressed that they use teamwork to grow their ideas and get feedback from others. The participants choose to keep an open mind and work with teams throughout the

organization on projects to allow for excellence. A team may be working on a project but knows someone else in the organization may have input from past experiences. They feel safe to take advantage of the knowledge at the organization. The nonprofit organization is working toward a mission, and by choosing to use teamwork as a benefit, the organization has more opportunities to follow their purpose.

Nonprofit Mission Influence on Millennial Employees

Nonprofit organizations have a mission as their base for operation (Daniel & Andersson, 2021). Through the interviews, the participants were able to discuss the mission of the nonprofit and how it related to them. Each participant relayed that their decision to accept a position with the organization was influenced by the organization's mission. The idea of being able to work with a shared passion with the organization allowed the millennial employees to know that their work would have an influence on the community. Multiple participants mentioned specific niches of the mission and how they work to execute pieces of that same mission daily. The mission of the organization goes beyond having an impact on the community; it gives purpose to the millennial employees. The millennial generation is a generation that is looking for more than just a job. Throughout all interviews, it was confirmed that the mission gives their work purpose (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2021).

Practical Organizational Benefits at Nonprofit Organizations for Millennial Employees

Millennial employees can be attracted to an organization for many different factors, but to have effective retention strategies in nonprofit organizations, there needs to be an understanding of themes popular among multiple employees. After reviewing the data collected from the study, practical benefits were most present in education and work-life balance.

Education as a benefit is found as a reward through knowledge. Whether the millennial team member found the benefit through higher education, continual education, or peer knowledge, they received the benefit of knowledge. All five millennial employees included in their interview responses that they gained knowledge through their employment with the nonprofit organization. The knowledge is not only beneficial to the millennial employees but also to others in their organization as well as those who benefit from the mission of the nonprofit organization. Education is a benefit that has the opportunity not only to retain employees but also to benefit the nonprofit organization in the growth of its purpose.

As an organizational leader, having an open mind can present as a benefit to millennial employees. As the world changes and new generations enter the workforce, nonprofit organizations must examine areas of practical benefits regarding work–life balance. COVID-19 gave many workplaces a new understanding of how organizations can operate during a crisis (Fraley et al., 2022; Himes, 2022). A factor that was widely introduced during the pandemic was working from home. During this period, many people found new ways to successfully operate, and success was found with an open mind. As the workforce started to return to the office, flexibility presented itself as a larger need. The participants were grateful for the flexibility offered by the nonprofit organization. Flexibility allowed employees to feel valued in the workplace, and the results revealed that employees have self-awareness. Interview responses included that flexibility is not a benefit that is being taken advantage of because it is being used with purpose. As one participant mentioned, if they must leave early to pick up their children from school, they can do so, but they plan to address any unfinished work during a time they typically would not be working. They are efficiently using work–life balance providing happy

personal and professional lives. When a millennial employee can remain happy because of practical benefits, it becomes an efficient strategy of retention for the nonprofit organization.

Implications for Action

Since 2020, the baby boomer generation has increasingly entered retirement while the millennial generation has continued to enter their careers (Fry, 2020). Because the baby boomer generation holds so many positions in the workforce, there needs to be an effective retention for millennial employees. Nonprofit organizations are working to give back to the community, so being prepared for retirement changes must take precedence. When studying the millennial generation, there searcher found that they seek to gain more than just a paycheck from their workplace; they are looking for a purpose (Bayraktar, 2022; Deloitte Global, 2022). The millennial generation and nonprofit organizations share the mindset of having a mission for their work.

To allow there to be an understanding of effective strategies for millennial employees at a nonprofit organization in Southern California, data were collected, reviewed, and analyzed. Through the case study, the researcher gained an understanding of action that should be taken by the organization to continue growth and success of the nonprofit organization. The nonprofit organization has been around for decades, as discovered in the verification of 501(c)(3) status, and to continue to stay operating, employees, specifically of the millennial generation, need to be recruited and retained. The millennial generation is the second largest population to enter the workforce since the baby boomer generation, giving them the opportunity to implement changes and standards to the workforce (Morales, 2021).

Effective strategies to retain millennial employees are categorized into five main themes that the nonprofit organization can offer to their employees: advancement, philanthropic,

education, work-life balance, and work environment. The nonprofit organization should continue to offer employees the opportunity to advance within the organization. Having employees be promoted allowed for knowledge gained across different seniority levels to be used as a benefit. An employee who started in an entry level position and found their way into a leadership position has been provided with experiences that allowed them to give valuable input to the organization. They have seen success and failures at different levels, which gives them a well-rounded perspective. Philanthropy is the driving force of the nonprofit organization, allowing employees to share the passion of giving back to build a stronger organization. Millennial employees want to do good through their work and give back to others, allowing them to find their purpose daily. Education creates opportunities for employee development; millennial employees strive to gain knowledge, and the nonprofit organization has multiple ways to fulfill that aspiration. In addition, the nonprofit organization can provide encouragement to the millennial employees, which can be seen as a useful strategy. Work-life balance and a healthy work environment leave a big impression on the millennial generation. The nonprofit organization has displayed to the millennial employees that it is flexible, which creates a healthy work environment promoting teamwork and success. Being open minded to the idea of flexibility in the workplace has had a significant impact on employee retention at the nonprofit organization.

To ensure future millennial employee retention at the nonprofit organization, there needs to be an understanding by the leaders of why they have had successful retention with the millennial generation so far. The case study presented five themes that show the nonprofit organization has positive retention, and through the results, there is an understanding of effective retention strategies for millennial employees at the nonprofit organization in Southern California.

Recommendations for Further Research

Through research for the case study, it was presented that Generation Z, those born between 1996 and 2010, are entering the workforce. Generation Z will be the next generation who will require research to be conducted to find effective retention strategies. Even though the generation follows the millennial generation into the workforce, they have their own ideals and preferred ways of working. To retain Generation Z at the nonprofit organization, there will need to be an understanding of what they are seeking to gain from the workforce as they continue to age into their careers. The youngest generation, just as millennials did, brings new objectives to the workforce, and it will be necessary to conduct a study to prepare future retention strategies as Generation X moves to retirement.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

The millennial generation has been a force of new ideas and ways in the workforce. Finding an understanding of what the millennial generation seeks to gain personally from their careers provides the opportunity to make or break an organization. Through research, the millennial generation has presented a need for purpose. Purpose in the workforce best aligns with the motives of the nonprofit sector. Through this case study, the similarities of opportunities offered by a nonprofit organization and their alliance to the needs of the millennial generation were able to coincide. The employees of the nonprofit organization were genuinely happy to share their experiences and the impact their career has had on them personally. Because the researcher has worked in both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors, it was intriguing to hear responses and wonder how the for-profit employees would answer similar questions. This case study has not only provided effective retention strategies for the nonprofit sector but also provided the researcher with a clear perspective of effective leadership.

REFERENCES

- AbouAssi, K., McGinnis Johnson, J., & Holt, S. B. (2019). Job mobility among millennials: Do they stay or do they go? *Review of Public Personnel Administration, 41*(2), 219–249.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371x19874396>
- Bayraktar, M. (2022, March 1). The Great Resignation of US labor force. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4047174>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. SAGE Publications.
- Clark, K. R. (2017). Managing multiple generations in the workplace. *Radiologic Technology, 88*(4), 379–398.
- Coupet, J., & Berrett, J. L. (2019). Toward a valid approach to nonprofit efficiency measurement. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 29*(3), 299–320.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Cruz, M. C. (2014). *Generation Y workplace needs and preferred leadership styles* (Publication No. 1562338) [Master's thesis, Pepperdine University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Dameria, S. L., Parama, S., & Nia, M. (2022). Conflict of generational gap in the workplace. *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research, 647*, 369–373.
<https://doi.org/10.2991/aebmr.k.220304.048>

- Daniel, J. L., & Andersson, F. (2021). What constitutes a new nonprofit? Investigating nonprofit organizational founding dates. *Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research*, 12(2), 45–57. <https://doi.org/10.29173/cjnser.2021v12n2a395>
- Dees, J. G., & Anderson, B. B. (2003). Sector-bending: Blurring lines between nonprofit and for-profit. *Society*, 40(4), 16–27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-003-1014-z>
- Deloitte Global. (2022). *A call for accountability and action: The Deloitte Global 2021 millennial and Gen Z survey*. <https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-shared/legacy/docs/insights/2022/2021-deloitte-global-millennial-survey-report.pdf>
- Dickson, S. A. (2015). *Stuck in the middle: Generation Xers lived experiences in the workforce while navigating between baby boomers and millennials, and perceived impact on their job satisfaction* [Doctoral dissertation, Colorado State University]. Mountain Scholar Digital Collections of Colorado. <http://hdl.handle.net/10217/166924>
- Fraley, E., Rispoli, S., and McDonagh, D. (2022, June 16) The Great Resignation and managing a multigenerational workforce. Texas City Attorneys Association, Summer Conference, June 16, 2022, Galveston, Texas, United States. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4138749>
- Freeman, C. M. L. (2020). *Employee psychological capital, intent to quit, and direct supervisor authentic leadership: Decreasing millennial turnover in the U.S. nonprofit sector* (Publication No. 28086351) [Doctoral dissertation, Pepperdine University] ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Fry, R. (2020, November 9). *The pace of boomer retirements has accelerated in the past year*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/11/09/the-pace-of-boomer-retirements-has-accelerated-in-the-past-year/>

- Gong, B., Greenwood, R. A., Hoyte, D., Ramkissoon, A., & He, X. (2018). Millennials and organizational citizenship behavior. *Management Research Review*, 41(7), 774–788. <https://doi.org/10.1108/mrr-05-2016-0121>
- Hamilton, D. E. (2020). *Retention and turnover of millennials in the workplace: A qualitative and phenomenological methodology* (Publication No. 27960900) [Doctoral dissertation, California Baptist University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Henson, S. (2018). *A new era of conscientious engagement: How small nonprofits can engage the millennial generation to support their work* [Thesis project, Northwest University]. NU Archives. <https://archives.northwestu.edu/handle/nu/38038>
- Himes, D. (2022, September). Great Resignation or great reallocation? A tale of two industries. *Monthly Labor Review*, 1–2.
- Hoolachan, J., & McKee, K. (2019). Inter-generational housing inequalities: ‘Baby boomers’ versus the ‘millennials.’ *Urban Studies*, 56(1), 210–225.
- Kovic, M., & Hänsli, N. (2018). Do millennials care about NPOs? Intergenerational differences in attitudes towards nonprofit organizations. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 29(5), 1112–1127.
- Kroth, A., & Young, S. J. (2014). New professionals, new desires: What millennials want in their work. *Recreational Sports Journal*, 38(1), 23–32. <https://doi.org/10.1123/rsj.2013-0013>
- Kunishige, C. M. (2021). *Millennials as nonprofit leaders: Their impact on organizational culture and programs* [Master’s thesis, California State University, Northridge]. CSUN ScholarWorks. <http://hdl.handle.net/10211.3/221569>

- Kuzior, A., Kettler, K., Rab, L. (2022). Great Resignation—Ethical, cultural, relational, and personal dimensions of Generation Y and Z employees’ engagement. *Sustainability*, *14*(6764), 6764. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14116764>
- Layder, D. (2018). *Investigative research: Theory and practice*. SAGE Publications.
- Leslie, B., Anderson, C., Bickham, C., Horman, J., Overly, A., Gentry, C., Callahan, C., & King, J. (2021). Generation Z perceptions of a positive workplace environment. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, *33*(3), 171–188.
- Mahal, P. K. (2012). HR practices as determinants of organizational commitment and employee retention. *IUP Journal of Management Research*, *11*(4), 37–53.
- Mann, M. (2022). *No more stereotypes: Exploring the work value priorities of Generation Z* (Publication No. 29209763) [Doctoral dissertation, Campbellsville University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Mannheim, K. (1952). *Essays on the sociology of knowledge*. Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315005058>
- March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. (1958). *Organizations*. Wiley.
- Montaro, M. (2020). *Millennial targeted recruitment and retention strategies in Allegheny County nonprofit organizations* (Publication No. 28093962) [Doctoral dissertation, Point Park University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Morales, V. (2021). *Organizational culture: An examination of preferences among generations* (Publication No. 28651386) [Master’s thesis, Azusa Pacific University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

- Nabawanuka, H., & Ekmekcioglu, E. B. (2021). Millennials in the workplace: Perceived supervisor support, work–life balance and employee well–being. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 54(1), 123–144. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ict-05-2021-0041>
- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2020). *Are generational categories meaningful distinctions for workforce management?* The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25796>.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2021, January). Estimates of resident population, by age group, live births, and fertility rate: 1970 through 2020. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_101.10.asp
- National Center for Health Statistics. (2002, September). Table 1-1. Live Births, Birth Rates, and Fertility Rates, by Race: United States, 1909-99. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/statab/t991x01.pdf>
- Ng, E. S., Lyons, S. T., & Schweitzer, L. (2018). *Generational career shifts: How matures, boomers, Gen Xers, and millennials view work*. Emerald Publishing.
- Parker, K., & Horowitz, J. M. (2022, March 10). *Majority of workers who quit a job in 2021 cite low pay, no opportunities for advancement, feeling disrespected*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/03/09/majority-of-workers-who-quit-a-job-in-2021-cite-low-pay-no-opportunities-for-advancement-feeling-disrespected/>
- Perilus, B. (2020). *Engaging four generations in the workplace: A single case study* (Publication No. 28027345) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Phoenix]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

- Prentice, C. R., & Brudney, J. L. (2018). Are you being served? Toward a typology of nonprofit infrastructure organizations and a framework for their assessment. *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 4(1), 41–58.
- Rivers, D. L. (2018). *A grounded theory of millennials job-hopping* (Publication No. 10976526) [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Ryder, N. B. (1965). The cohort as a concept in the study of social change. *American Sociological Review*, 30(6), 843–861. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2090964>
- Seemiller, C., & Grace, M. (2018). *Generation Z: A Century in the making*. Routledge.
- Souffrant, D. (2020). *Beyond diversity to inclusion; Fostering an inclusive workforce for millennials* (Publication No. 27995561) [Doctoral dissertation, Cardinal Stritch University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Stephens, D. O. (2021). Strategies to engage millennial employees (A multiple case study). *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 9(2), 618.
- Sulhan, M. (2019). The business value of non-profit organization: Organizational communication's perspective. *International Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4(2), 6–14.
- Sweeney, L. H., Bengue, M., & Carter, H. (2019). Engaging millennials in the workplace. *EDIS*, 2019(1), 1–2.
- Tosi, H. L. (2009). *Theories of organization*. SAGE Publications.
- Valenti, A. (2019). Leadership preferences of the millennial generation. *Journal of Business Diversity*, 19(1), 75–84.

Wilson, B. (2022). *Research on the challenges of “The Great Resignation” faced by nonprofits*

[Capstone project, California State University, Monterey Bay]. Digital Commons @

CSUMB. https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/caps_thes_all/1274

Wolor, C. W., Nurkhin, A., & Citriadin, Y. (2021). Leadership style for millennial generation,

five leadership theories, systematic literature review. *Quality-Access to Success*, 22(184),

105–110.

Wood, J. C. (2019). Millennials in the workplace: Mystery or magic? *Dispute Resolution*

Journal, 74(1), 111–120.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Informed Consent

Title of Research: Understanding Millennial Retention: A Case Study Discovering Effective Millennial Employee Retention at a Nonprofit Organization in Southern California

What is the study about? The purpose of this case study will be to discover retention strategies to influence an increase of retention of Millennial employees at a nonprofit in Southern California.

What will be asked of me? You will be asked to participate in a Zoom video interview which includes questions about your current employment. This interview does not include any sensitive or highly personal questions. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Who is involved? This research project is authored by Ashley E. Osier, Doctoral Student at California Baptist University

Are there any risks? The study deals with a variety of employment related questions. For some, reflecting on problems at work can be distressing. Although it seems unlikely that the questions will cause more distress than you may experience in daily life, this is a possibility. If this happens, you may discontinue your participation and contact me, your organizations' Human Resources department, or the CBU counseling center at (951) 689-1120.

What are some benefits? As a member of the Millennial generation in the nonprofit sector, there may be a benefit which will allow your current or future organizational leaders to understand the ideals of the millennial generation pending the results of the study.

Can I stop participating in the study? You have the right to withdrawal from the study at any time.

What if I have questions about my rights as a research participant or complaints? For more information about this study, to report an adverse experience, or for more information about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Ashley Osier at California Baptist University at XXXXXXXX.XXXXXX@calbaptist.edu or the Institutional Review Board at IRB@calbaptist.edu.

If you do not agree to participate in this study, please close your browser at this time. By continuing to complete the screening questions, you are stating that, “I understand what this study is about and what is being asked of me. I understand that my participation is voluntary, I can withdraw at any time, and that this will not impact my relationship with the researcher or California Baptist University. My continuation indicates that I agree to participate in this study.”

DO YOU AGREE TO CONTINUE?

APPENDIX B

Participant Screening

- The employee is employed with the nonprofit organization full-time.
- The employee has been employed with the organization for a minimum of one year.
- The employee's birth year is between 1981 and 1995, classifying them as a member of the Millennial generation.
- The employee agrees and consents to partake in the study, which will involve a recorded interview using the video conferencing tool, Zoom, and third-party audio transcription. The recordings will be stored by the researcher using password protected accounts.

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions

Research Question	Interview Questions
RQ1: What are effective strategies that will positively impact retention of millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?	<p>Q1: What are the organization’s career growth and development opportunities?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What positions have you held since starting at the organization?
RQ2: What influence does a nonprofit organization’s mission have on retaining millennial employees at nonprofit organizations?	<p>Q2: What values are common between you and the nonprofit organization?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you wish the organization did more of? <p>Q3: What is your favorite part about working for the nonprofit organization?</p>
RQ3: What are practical organizational benefits that attract millennial employees to nonprofit organizations?	<p>Q4: What attracted you to initially apply to the nonprofit organization?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What were your hesitations when applying to the nonprofit sector? <p>Q5: What are the opportunities or benefits offered by the nonprofit organization that resonate with you most?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which opportunities or benefits offered by the organization influence your retention? 2. Which opportunities or benefits are least likely to affect your retention with the organization?